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TRENDS

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**Multicultural Children's Literature
in the United States**

**Karen Patricia Smith
Issue Editor**

**University of Illinois
Graduate School of Library
and Information Science**

LIBRARY TRENDS

Library Trends, a quarterly thematic journal, focuses on current trends in all areas of library practice. Each issue addresses a single theme in-depth, exploring topics of interest primarily to practicing librarians and information scientists and secondarily to educators and students.

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Introduction

KAREN PATRICIA SMITH

THIS IS THE FIRST ISSUE of *Library Trends* to focus specifically on multiculturalism as it relates to literature for children and young adults. As we move toward the twenty-first century, concerns about literacy and the abilities of young people to fully participate in the appreciation of a national literary heritage—for information and recreation—are being further challenged by political, social, and economic factors. Simultaneously, and ironically, human diversity, so crucial to the richness of the arts and represented in a mosaic of ethnic, ideological, religious, and racial backgrounds, offers challenges to the very stability of American society.

The multicultural ethic in the United States should be, due to the demographic composition of the country, a concern of the populace at large as well as that of the service professions. However, interests in this area have proven to be of a cyclical nature, often determined by the political climate of the country. During the 1960s and 1970s, concern for the multicultural concept was deemed crucial in addressing the problem of racially disenfranchised minorities. Such concerns were strongly linked to the civil rights movement. In particular, the country noted an increased interest in the publication of materials designed to address the specific needs and interests of African-American and Hispanic members of the populace.

During the 1980s, interest in the publication of materials for a diverse populace continued but was tempered by the spirit of the times, namely by the more conservative political stance of the country. The pace in publication of books about minorities seemed to slow

in general when compared with the earlier era, and many books in this category were permitted to go out of print.

In the closing years of the 1980s, concerns regarding multiculturalism began to intensify once more as the racial ethnic composition of the populace continued to grow and change. According to the 1990 census figures, Black Americans represent 12.1 percent of the population (11.7 percent in 1980); Hispanic Americans, 9 percent (6.4 percent in 1980); Asian-Pacific Islanders, 2.9 percent (1.5 percent in 1980); and American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut persons, 0.8 percent (0.6 percent in 1980) of the population. Current domestic events show that the tensions between and among members of various racial and ethnic groups, and concerns regarding cultural misunderstandings in general, have failed to diminish. Andrew Hacker (1992) has said of racial tensions in his recent book: "That racial tensions cast a pall upon this country can hardly be denied. People now vent feelings of hostility and anger that in the past they repressed. Race has become a national staple for private conversation and public controversy" (p. 4). From the recurring tensions in Brooklyn, New York, to the recent disturbances of July 1992 in Los Angeles, California, and other parts of the country, the patterned course of human misunderstandings continues to surface again and again, calling upon fortitude, creativity, and dedication to resolve the delicate and often volatile business of social relationships.

It has been acknowledged that perceptions of people and events are often formed during childhood and adolescence. While no medium may be as effective toward bridging the differences among people as the actual process of meeting, speaking, and getting to know one another, sharing the cultures of others through the medium of literature can serve as a means toward creating a better understanding among individuals. Put another way, creating the conditions leading to such understandings and appreciations of the cultures of others can lead toward gaining and developing greater respect for the literary and cultural contributions of others.

OVERVIEW

This issue of *Library Trends* focuses on research done in the area of multicultural children's literature in the United States. Highlighted are issues regarding trends in the literature and associated areas over time, as well as the availability and promotion of the literature within various settings.

The term "multicultural" has experienced a changing and broadening definition regarding the specific populations to which it may apply. Given this fact and also the reality that within the framework of a single issue of *Library Trends* it is not possible to

include all representatives of the diverse population to whom the term may apply, the editor has chosen to focus the discussion upon the literary issues impacting people of color as those representative of the major racial groupings designated by the Office of Management and Budget of the federal government, "which provides standards on ethnic and racial categories for statistical reporting to be used by all Federal agencies" (Bureau of the Census, 1991, B-11; B-12). The categories designating people of color are: black, Hispanic¹, American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut and Asian or Pacific Islander. The contributed articles will focus upon literary concerns of these designated groups and are meant to be, in a phrase borrowed from Bunker and Ratner (1992), "suggestive, not prescriptive" (p. 2) in presentation.

MULTICULTURAL ETHIC AND CONNECTIONS TO LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

The first article in this issue of *Library Trends* and written by the editor, offers an introduction to the multicultural debate, its relationship to literature, and some of the specific issues encountered when discussing it in terms of literature for children and young people. The editor presents a framework against which multiculturalism may be discussed in regard to specific populations.

FRAMING AND REFRAMING IMAGES AND REALITIES

The image of minority individuals has moved through a cycle of changes during the twentieth century. Perceptions which were commonly accepted at the turn of the century are now often perceived quite differently in light of late twentieth-century sensitivities regarding stereotyping. The article by Kay E. Vandergrift examines images of ethnic minorities in early twentieth-century literature for children as seen in the work of several representative authors within a feminist theoretical framework.

The decade of the 1990s is a particularly difficult time for African-American youth. Caught up in the social problems during times which are economically difficult for all Americans, African-American youth face challenges which at times are overwhelming. In her article on African-American young adult literature, Carol Jones Collins suggests the positive role that young adult literature can play in the lives of African-American young people in helping to transform negative images and realities into a more positive action plan for the future.

In her article on Asian Indian literature for young people, Meena Khorana emphasizes a more active publishing agenda by Asian Indian authors in their focus upon the Asian Indian experience in the United

States. She traces the course of literary activity in this area, highlighting the progress of its development, and uses as a basic framework, references to the circumstances and literature of other Asian American groups. The development of the literary tradition here is seen to have strong social, economic, and political connections.

Arlene Hirschfelder presents a discussion of the literature written by and about Native Americans, delineating the types of literature available as well as perspectives about the circumstances and conditions under which it should be shared. Through a discussion of specific examples from the various genre, she offers for consideration some of the challenges faced by those seeking unbiased Native American literature.

LEARNERS, LITERARY OPPORTUNITY, AND ACCESS

Before students can avail themselves of multicultural opportunities available through literature, the materials themselves must be there, and those who are responsible for providing them must have a clear sense of collection-development goals, selection processes, and ways in which materials can be promoted to motivate and maintain the interest of young people. Adela Artola Allen presents a survey of school media centers carried out in eight urban areas of the United States and designed to elicit information about the promotion of Hispanic literature for children and young people. Sandra Champion, school media specialist, presents a case study of the Hialeah High School, in Hialeah, Florida, and examines the process through which Hispanic adolescents acquire meaning from literary texts and also shares some surprising findings regarding the types of texts for which they have a preference.

Renee Tjoumas examines developments in Native American literature. She reviews the professional literature written over the years on Native American library services and collection-development practices and presents a preliminary study of collection-development practices conducted within the setting of public libraries in areas of the United States with large populations of Native American people. Tjoumas discusses the need for adequate collection-development techniques in Native American literature and suggests some considerations which should be placed on future agendas to improve access to available materials.

SIGNIFICANT AND GROUND-BREAKING ACHIEVEMENTS FROM ALTERNATIVE PRESSES

Until recently, the public relied primarily upon large publishing houses to supply them with materials for children and youth. The 1980s and 1990s are showing some welcome activity from alternative

publishing houses. In her article, Kathleen Horning offers insight into the philosophies which motivated the publishers to embark upon a seemingly "risky" enterprise in their decisions to publish multicultural literature for children. She presents as well, a discussion of some of the major contributions made by alternative presses to the multicultural impetus, particularly in the area of African-American and Native American contributions.

NOTE

¹ The Census Bureau points out that Hispanic persons may be of any race. In the 1990 census, Hispanic individuals were asked to complete a self identification question in which they could indicate with which of the specific Hispanic categories they identified. For purposes of this issue, the editor refers to the broad category of Hispanic persons; it is made clear by contributors to which sub-divisions they are referring within the context of their commentaries.

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The Multicultural Ethic and Connections to Literature for Children and Young Adults

KAREN PATRICIA SMITH

ABSTRACT

IN THIS ARTICLE, the concept of multiculturalism and its relationship to literature for young people is discussed. As a background for issues presented, changing viewpoints of multiculturalism are noted and connections are made to related disciplines, highlighting the wide scope of the debate and the importance of the controversies. The author defines specific areas in which progress has been made in recognizing achievements related to the publication and recognition of multicultural achievements in literature for young people, and also discusses the areas in which greater progress has yet to be realized.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Multiculturalism is a concept whose time has come—again. While the United States has always been a “multicultural” country, the full acknowledgment and implications of this fact did not begin to dawn upon the American populace until the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The term has been used by some almost as a synonym for the earlier designation “minority” to refer to the disenfranchised—i.e., those whose interests were not necessarily represented by the “mainstream” white culture. In an article published in *The American Quarterly*, Philip Gleason (1991) points out that “minority” was not used to designate America’s ethnic groups until 1932 (Gleason, 1991, p. 394) as noted in Donald Young’s (1932) book *American Minority Peoples: A Study in Racial and Cultural Conflicts in the United States*. This is a title, which, unfortunately, might well be applicable today.

Prior to this, the earliest use of the term "minority" referred to the treatment of various European groups involved in World War I negotiations. "Multicultural" has undergone similar changes in meaning. In his column, "On Language," in the February 23, 1992, issue of *The New York Times Magazine*, William Safire noted, with typical ironic amusement, the many meanings of the prefix "multi." Among the various nouns and adjectives to which "multi" is applied, he mentioned "multicultural" and noted that one of its earliest appearances was in a 1941 *Herald Tribune* book review (of an unnamed book) where the book was described as "a fervent sermon against nationalism, national prejudice and behavior in favor of a 'multicultural' way of life." Safire went on to say: "When proponents of cultural diversity gained attention derogating Western civilization in the 1980s, *multicultural* became a college curriculum code word for 'not dominated by whites'" (Safire, 1992, p. 20).

The concept of multiculturalism became a more inclusive term, exceeding earlier usages, to incorporate those groups who had long resided in the United States but who had not yet become fully recognized for what they too could contribute to American culture—African-Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. These groups were disenfranchised politically as well as socially; one could not find adequate mention of them, for example, in the history textbooks as having been a vital and productive people, nor could one find written evidence of the contributions they had made to contemporary society.

As American society continues to become sensitized to the needs of various cultures in the United States (though, in some circles, a sensitization is taking place somewhat under protest), "multiculturalism" has assumed a somewhat broader interpretation. It is often inclusive of the handicapped, gay and lesbian individuals, and, in short, any persons whose lifestyle, enforced or otherwise, distinguishes them as identifiable members of a group other than the "mainstream."

In a recent article entitled "Sorting Through the Multicultural Rhetoric," Sara Bullard (1991/1992) commented on the dilemma of defining the concept. "Educators disagree, first, over which groups should be included in multicultural plans—racial and ethnic groups, certainly, but what about regional, social class, gender, disability, religious, language, and sexual orientation groupings" (p. 5)? The term has assumed very broad interpretations reflecting the needs and demands of contemporary society.

This being the case, however, it is still necessary, for the sake of coherence, to narrow the scope of one's discussion within an available format. Therefore, given this factor and the need to maintain

a focus on this issue, the term will be used during this discussion to refer to people of color—that is, individuals who identify with African-American, Hispanic, American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut, and Asian or Pacific Islander heritages.

MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE'S RELATIONSHIP TO LITERATURE

Concerns regarding multiculturalism and literature have begun to permeate all sectors. These interests and concerns have both long-range and long-term implications for children and youth. While the field of library and information studies is one distinguished by its own characteristics, it is also unarguably an eclectic one. Therefore, we cannot help but be influenced by the arguments taking place in other related disciplines, particularly when these have strong implications for the considerations to be pondered and the actions to be taken in our own field. The "conversations" and debates occurring within the humanities and social sciences are not to be taken lightly by library professionals, particularly since they are responsible for providing access to the materials needed for studies in these areas and for response to the calls for service stemming from changes in the thinking of society at large.

On the college and university levels, there are current debates regarding the literary canon—i.e., the "classic" materials to which every child or young person must be exposed during his or her school career in order to be deemed literate or educated. These are issues which, while they are initiated on the higher education levels, eventually filter down to the elementary and secondary levels, affecting the lives of young persons. In the past, this canon has effectively excluded, or only marginally included, non-Western cultures. Viewed sequentially, this is relevant to the situation in schools and in all settings in which children and youth participate, for the university prepares graduates and some of these graduates become teachers, school media specialists, and public librarians who in turn may continue to perpetuate the basic tenor of what they have been exposed to over the years. If these individuals have had minimal exposure to non-Western cultures, then they do not enter their chosen professions with a background of knowledge about multicultural interests.

There have been several attempts to "open up" the canon and expand it to include literature by and about non-Western cultures. At the University of Arizona, for example, a new series of humanities courses entitled "Critical Concepts in Western Culture" has been instituted (Mooney, 1991, p. A9). These courses seek to highlight the contributions of non-Western peoples to the literary repertoire:

"Students are examining ideas associated with Western civilization, but they're looking at them from various cultural perspectives. They're studying Dante and Pope, but also Kiowan Indian mythology" (Mooney, 1991, p. A9). However, such moves are not met with approbation in all quarters. For, as some colleges and universities move toward a more equitable approach, others have shown, and continue to show, signs of resistance. This was evident at a recent American studies meeting where several pioneers of multicultural humanities research were present—as well as their opponents. Leo Marx, a professor of humanities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, denounced recent scholarship in American studies as responding to, among other things, "the knee-jerk incantation of race, class, and gender" (Winkler, 1990, p. A9).

In a related discipline, that of history, the Organization of American Historians (OAH) has issued a statement supporting the importance of multiculturalism as a concept to be infused within studies in history within the public school system. The OAH has stated that, "the multiple objectives of history education can best be served by curricula that afford students the opportunity in the public schools to study both the history of the larger society and the history of minority groups and non-Western cultures" (Winkler, 1991, p. A5).

What is called for is an honest presentation of Western and non-Western traditions conveyed through an approach which values pluralism while not marginalizing those whose traditions comprise the various segments of the whole, a view supported in the literature by Banks (1991/1992, p. 35) and Gates (in Winkler, 1992, p. A12), two leading figures in the multicultural debate. The field of library and information studies has responded as well. Peter Erickson (1991), a research librarian at the Clark Art Institute, has stated that:

In place of the traditionalist assumption of universalism, the multicultural approach uses the concept of "identity politics." The point is not to create absolute, immovable barriers, but to acknowledge that readers' identities need to be taken into account if we are to understand the culture we hold in common. (p. B3)

SPECIFIC ISSUES IN MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Within such a socially and politically charged concept as multiculturalism, it is not surprising to find a myriad of related "sub-issues" which often surface in isolation as foundations for debate. Some of these issues will be briefly outlined here in regards to their connection to literature for children and young people, but it is evident that they are not limited to this framework and are, in effect, indicative of the literary debate as a whole. These issues are those of "exclusivity,"

the "insider" versus the "outsider" approach to literature, stereotyping, and the issue of actual availability of resources for youth.

The term "exclusivity" will be used here to describe a situation which exists when a librarian or an educator faces a group of young people who are all from one particular racial or ethnic group. The question may arise as to whether or not it is really necessary to introduce them to literature by and about other groups. After all, the thinking may be that these young persons will probably have little contact with any of these "other" cultures within the particular environment in which they are living.

While this may seem a narrow point of focus—too narrow, it might be thought, for professionals in the field to contemplate—I offer the following anecdote. Not too long ago, I served as a speaker at a university in the Midwest on the topic of a disenfranchised group of people residing outside the United States—the Aboriginal people of Australia. I noted during my speech that the audience was very "monocultural" in appearance—a phenomenon that tends to stand out to someone from a large urban environment with a racially and ethnically mixed population. After the presentation, a round of questions ensued from the audience. One young woman raised her hand and wondered whether, in general, it was *really* necessary to emphasize the contributions of other racial and ethnic groups to the young people with whom she was working. After all, she argued, the immediate environment in which these young persons resided, contained white persons from a distinctly northern European background with no persons of color (any color) represented. My response was that as professionals involved in the training of, or as providers of materials for young people, whether it be in a classroom, school media center, or public library, we are responsible for preparing young people to enter the world, not merely preparing them to exist within the environment in which they are currently being reared. We do not know whom these young persons will meet later or under what circumstances contact will take place. The need for "all around preparation" to facilitate human understanding is clear. Indeed, to go a step further, it is our moral responsibility. We must look toward this preparation, which is what, in fact, education is all about. Thus, we owe it to those before us to expand their horizons even if, after they leave us in the school media center or the local public library, the people they see on a regular basis still continue to be those very like their own immediate family or relatives or friends or neighbors, in short, a mini monocultural society. If we cannot do this, if library collections are severely limited, if we continue to "overlook" the need to expand and update our collections, then are we not guilty of perpetuating the known and supporting the

disenfranchisement of minority voices? While we must be wary of overgeneralizations, it is felt that the better prepared young people are to understand cultures other than their own, the more flexible they will become in "accepting" new groups with a more open mind. Admittedly, this is an extended response to an audience inquiry, but one perhaps which needs to be discussed a bit further.

Inherent in this philosophy is also the need to have a strong appreciation for one's own culture so that one can better recognize the similarities to, and differences from, the culture of "the mainstream." One should not assume that this will be "taken care of in the home." Such an assumption may not only be unrealistic in terms of opportunities available within the home and the cost and availability of multicultural materials, but, in fact, brings us right back to the issue of exclusivity, which works in opposition to all members of the populace having the opportunity to "know and grow." Multicultural literature must be shared with all and should not be thought of as exclusive property (or the exclusive domain or responsibility) of a designated group. Everyone can and must benefit through participation in the experience. It is even possible that, through the provision of a more "open" environment, new groups emigrating to the United States will find it a bit easier to adjust to American society, a situation not the exclusive dilemma of people of color.

The second issue of the "insider" versus the "outsider" is one which is being hotly debated. For years, minority populaces have been written about and "described" by essentially white authors who are outside the cultures about whom they are writing or illustrating. This practice has had negative and positive effects. On the negative side, it has often resulted in biased viewpoints regarding those groups being written about, showing agendas which are linked to social or political prejudices. This has been the case with African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. The second effect of the practice has been a good one. As a result of the interest of nonminority individuals who have researched their subjects carefully and who have empathy for the people about whom they are writing or illustrating, more information about cultures other than mainstream white cultures has been shared with the populace at large.

The question posed and often debated is whether or not material written by so-called "outsiders" is actually *valid* material. It is suggested here that, while the experience of having lived as a member of the culture one is writing about offers one the opportunity of communicating that experience in a unique way, it is also felt strongly that, if the material is properly researched and genuine and authentic in intent and presentation, the contribution of the "outsider" has

the potential of being a valuable one. This view has recently been addressed by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (1991) in his article "'Authenticity,' or the Lesson of Little Tree," in which he states:

our histories, individual and collective, do affect what we wish to write and what we are able to write. But that relation is never one of fixed determinism. No human culture is inaccessible to someone who makes the effort to understand, to learn, to inhabit another world. (p. 30)

This view is particularly interesting since it represents one not often voiced, if voiced at all, by black authors. In another article, Gates seems to call for a productive sharing of culture in an equitable way, as he also suggests that we "think of American culture as a conversation among different voices—even if it's a conversation that some of us weren't able to join until recently" (Winkler, 1990, p. A8).

What we need to continue to see, however, is an *increase* in the number of minority authors and illustrators writing about and illustrating work regarding their respective groups. Through such endeavors, the reading public will be offered that uniqueness in "inside" perspective that often is unavailable when experiences have not been personally lived.

The third issue raised here, and closely connected to that of "insider" versus "outsider" viewpoints, is that of stereotyping—always a matter of concern. This refers specifically to instances where literary images are provided of a people, images which are either completely false or which single out an isolated phenomenon and present it in a light which makes it appear as though it were true for an entire group of people. This is an area of great concern, particularly in regard to materials for children and youth who inhabit the impressionable world of those beginning to form their viewpoints and opinions of the people around them. It is also a reality which several of the other contributors to this issue have chosen to explore in different ways.

The problem of stereotyping leads us directly into another area of concern—that of availability of resources. Many library collections which are responsible for providing resources to the young (and also to those who teach the young) are deficient in the depth and variety of their collections. The collecting philosophies which affect collections—their growth (or lack of growth) and adequacy (or lack of it)—are directly responsible for what one sees on the shelves in libraries. These philosophies do not necessarily come about as a result of purposeful neglect on the part of the individuals in charge but often are the unhappy results of budgetary deficits or misplaced priorities. As a result, young people will often see, in their school and public libraries, outdated and inaccurate materials which continue to circulate unchallenged by the presence of better materials.

It must also be added that current economic conditions in this nation as a whole are causing libraries to face serious dilemmas in the purchasing of new books; there is often a long period between the time that materials are published and the actual point at which the material appears on the shelf of the local library. This is a situation which causes great frustration on the part of academics, practitioners, and other members of the public as well. James Fish (1992) has expressed concerns regarding the limitations in resources and selection and service criteria:

When resources are severely limited, it is difficult to find the wherewithal for meeting the needs of new service groups. Sometimes, the choices force a reduction of some service or activity for other library users. This not only goes against a good librarian's instinct to want to do more for the public, it also invites a negative reaction from those who see themselves losing service. The desire to respond to cultural diversity requires some significant rethinking of the library, both philosophically and operationally. What languages get represented in collections, and how large should those collections be? If space is already limited, where do you find room for new collections? Do you concentrate subject/language strength in a few facilities so that users get a better product or spread things around to most facilities to get closer to potential users?...As a multicultural, multilingual staff is recruited, what languages and cultures should be represented in what numbers and in what locations? (p. 35)

It is felt that, if there is an increase in the number of offerings from multicultural authors and illustrators demonstrating the sensitivity needed to present the cultural experience, the problems of inaccurate and inappropriate images as they are present in books for the young will become fewer as a greater number of more "culturally correct" images begin to enter the market. Such awareness will also result in positive models for authors and illustrators working outside their respective cultures in that they will be more aware of negative and positive images of various cultures. Nevertheless, the issue of available resources, as indicated, is far more complicated for it goes beyond the framework of what is made available in a literary sense and speaks to the issue of the severe economic conditions with which all professions, particularly the service professions in our nation, are attempting to cope. However, the provision of high quality resources from qualified and informed authors and illustrators will provide the competitive edge needed to keep up the standard in publishing. When financial resources are expended, therefore, there will be excellent opportunities to purchase materials selected from among high quality offerings.

RESPONSES TO THE NEED FOR MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Despite the challenges presented by differing philosophies regarding "how to get the job done," the lack or inadequacies of

available resources, and the prevailing poor (and historically, cyclical) economic situation, one notes periodic reawakenings of interest in the children's publishing world in providing resources both of a trade and professional nature. Again, this reawakening cannot be separated from prevailing political considerations but is rather an outgrowth of that phenomenon.

During the 1960s and 1970s, there was tremendous interest in the idea of multicultural materials for children and young adults, an interest not divorced from the civil rights movement, as indicated in the beginning of this discussion. It was recognized that there was a terrible void; authors and illustrators were encouraged to come forward and fill this void. One such group which played a role in meeting this need was the Council on Interracial Books for Children (CIBC), whose bulletin served as a valuable vehicle for revealing issues involving evaluation of multicultural children's literature as well as encouraging new authors and illustrators to enter the publishing field.

Eloise Greenfield, writing in an article appearing in the bulletin in 1979, clearly stated what she saw to be the aims of multicultural literature for children. In considering the needs of young people thirteen years later, one notes that the priorities must necessarily still be the same:

The books that reach children should: authentically depict and interpret their lives and their history; build self-respect and encourage the development of positive values; make children aware of their strength and leave them with a sense of hope and direction; teach them the skills necessary for the maintenance of health and for economic survival; broaden their knowledge of the world, past and present, and offer some insight into the future. These books will not be pap—the total range of human problems, struggles and accomplishments can be told in this context with no sacrifice of literary merit....A book that has been chosen as worthy of a child's emotional investment must have been judged on the basis of what it is—not a collection of words arranged in some unintelligible but artistic design, but a statement powerfully made and communicated through the artistic and skillful use of language. (Greenfield, 1979, p. 4)

Indeed, the message cannot be adequately communicated *unless* all of these ingredients are there.

MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE PUBLICATIONS, AWARDS, AND CONFERENCES

We see renewed interest in the provision of multicultural materials for children and young persons. Recently, the Cooperative Children's Book Center published its third edition of *Multicultural Literature for Children and Young Adults*. The first edition of this book was published in 1988 and the most recent issue in 1991. Kruse and Horning (1991) note in their introduction, for example, that,

while in 1985 only eighteen books published in the category of children's books were written and/or illustrated by African-Americans, in 1990, fifty-one titles were documented (p. xii). While this represents an increase in the numbers of books written and/or illustrated by African-Americans, one must also realize that, in 1985, approximately 2,500 children's books were published as opposed to almost 5,000 in 1990. Thus, while we see an improvement in the representation of books by African-Americans, it must be realized that the representation is still small when compared to the total number of books published. Further, the two authors point out that the contributions by other people of color were considerably fewer.

The current focus on multicultural literature has resulted in a number of bibliographic tools for gaining in-depth information on various ethnic and racial groups. Merri Lindgren (1990) has produced *The Multicolored Mirror: Cultural Substance in Literature for Children and Young Adults*, which includes contributions from noted individuals in the area of children's book publishing such as Walter Dean Myers, Cheryl Hudson and Wayne Hudson, Doris Seale, and Tom Feelings. Isabel Schön has provided annotated bibliographies as part of the Scarecrow Press series *Books in Spanish for Children and Young Adults*, the most recent having been published in 1989 with an updated version scheduled to be released soon. Meena Khorana has provided a unique reference tool with the 1992 publication of *The Indian Subcontinent in Literature for Children and Young Adults: An Annotated Bibliography of English-Language Books*. This extensive bibliography facilitates access to literature associated with Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, the Himalayan kingdoms of Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, and Tibet.

Some controversy exists regarding the isolating of multicultural authors from "mainstream" authors and illustrators in the provision of separate lists or bibliographies, an issue discussed in depth in Francis Smith Foster's excellent essay "What Matters the Color of the Tiger's Stripes?: The Significance of Bibliographies by Ethnic Identification. However, Foster (1988) states:

Bibliographies by ethnic identification can serve the same functions as bibliographies by nationality, genre, era, or theme. As resources, lists of works grouped by some common factor, they can make our jobs of selecting representative materials easier....Such bibliographies can introduce new writers, new titles and new subject matter as they expand our ideas of literary history and traditions....And finally, bibliographies by ethnic identification can help us see the absence, hear the silences, of writers whose works are not available. When we see the precipitous decline of new titles by or about particular groups, subjects, or attitudes, we can at least be aware of the threatened extinction. (p. 82)

Another publication entitled *Our Family, Our Friends, Our World: An Annotated Guide to Significant Multicultural Books for Children and Teenagers* (1992), edited by Lyn Miller-Lachmann, is

indicative of the kind of interest being generated in multicultural children's materials. The compilation takes an international approach to multiculturalism, including works about ethnic and racial populaces who reside within the United States and chapters on literature representative of the many regions around the world.

There needs to be an increase in the number of publications providing updated information about multicultural authors and illustrators, their work, thematic modes, and methods of work. Such tools assist young persons, as well as those responsible for educating them both inside and outside the framework of schools, in gaining insight into the creators of artistic works as individuals and assists in promoting better understanding and appreciation of and for their work. Barbara Rollock's *Black Authors and Illustrators of Children's Books: A Biographical Dictionary*, second edition, identifies black authors and illustrators and offers basic and helpful information about their backgrounds. Pat Cummings's (1992) beautifully illustrated book, *Talking with Artists: Conversations with Victoria Chess, Pat Cummings, Leo and Diane Dillon, Richard Egielski, Lois Ehlert, Lisa Campbell Ernst, Tom Feelings, Steven Kellogg, Jerry Pinkney, Amy Schwartz, Lane Smith, Chris Van Allsburg and David Wiesner*, presents fourteen black and white illustrators, offers brief vignettes of their lives, sources of their inspiration, photographs of the individuals, and examples of their artwork. This book concentrates upon the skill of the craft rather than ethnic identity, but, through its visual format and remarks shared by the illustrators, informs the audience about which of the illustrators are black and also shares an overview of the craft of all represented.

As mentioned earlier, during the 1960s and 1970s, the efforts of the Council On Interracial Books for Children had been significant in encouraging new children's publications by authors and illustrators of color. This was also accomplished by the council through the holding of an annual contest for the best new manuscript as well as featured columns promoting the work of new illustrators. Through such efforts, authors and illustrators such as Mildred D. Taylor, Walter Dean Myers, Pat Cummings, and Leo Dillon and Diane Dillon came to be recognized as strong voices at the forefront of creating books for children and young adults.

Awards are an important mechanism for recognizing literary and artistic excellence in any discipline and make a powerful statement about the "validity" of a type of literature in the minds of the public. Given the difficulties encountered in the field of children's literature in the acknowledgment of this field as one worthy of scholarly research (an issue often mentioned in the literature about the field), the presentation of awards of excellence for achievements in the field

is particularly important. This is a practice which much be maintained, encouraged, and promoted among all areas of the field. The Coretta Scott King Award, an award presented by the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association, was first established in 1969 and is given to the most outstanding works written or illustrated by black authors or illustrators. Among its selection criteria is stated the requirement: "The book must portray people, places, things, and events in a manner sensitive to the true worth and value of all beings" (n.p.). While one notes over the years many authors and/or illustrators who have either won the award or who have had their books named as one of its honor books on more than one occasion—as exemplified by Virginia Hamilton, Mildred D. Taylor, Walter Dean Myers, and Eloise Greenfield (these last two authors are 1992 winners in the award and honor categories, respectively)—the Coretta Scott King Award continues to offer African-Americans a unique forum for recognition of new talent in the field.

In 1992, HarperCollins and ScottForesman announced the creation of a mentoring program and annual awards in conjunction with the Center for Multicultural Children's Literature. The stated purpose of the center will be to provide a mentoring service for talented multicultural writers and illustrators seeking to be published in this field. The center proposes a unique program whereby candidates will be paired with established authors and illustrators who will act as mentors (Center for Multicultural Children's Literature, 1992, n.p.). Such a move on the part of two major publishing companies has the potential of serving as a highly motivational force for future authors and illustrators in much the same way as the Council for Interracial Books awards did during the 1960s and 1970s.

It is also significant to note the many conferences and seminars recently devoted to the area of multicultural literature for children and young adults. At their May 1991 meeting in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, held at the University of Southern Mississippi, the Children's Literature Association had a special panel on the topic of multiculturalism in which such issues as the defining of multiculturalism, as well as multiculturalism and its relationship to comparative literature, historiography, and reader response, were topics discussed.

The American Library Association, in an important pre-conference entitled "The Many Faces in Children's Books: Images in Words and Pictures for Our Multicultural Society," on June 27 and June 28, 1991, explored this theme through the representation of such authors and illustrators as Mildred Pitts Walter, Keiko

Narahashi, Allen Say, and Rosa Guy. And, certainly, the issue is annually addressed by the presenters of the Virginia Hamilton Conference held each year on the campus of Kent State University. The 1991 conference, for example, included such speakers as Sheila Hamanaka, Mildred Pitts Walter, and Nicholasa Mohr.

Such events are evidence of the present strong interest in, and positive effects of, the multicultural forum. It is to be hoped that the current focus is indicative of a permanent trend, capable of withstanding the realities of uncertain social and political forecasts, and that this trend will be recognized more universally within our nation as the potential source of creating and bonding better human relationships.

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A Feminist Perspective on Multicultural Children's Literature in the Middle Years of the Twentieth Century

KAY E. VANDERGRIFF

ABSTRACT

FEMINIST THEORY, PARTICULARLY the work of Peggy McIntosh, is used to examine the development of multicultural literature for children and youth in the middle years of the twentieth century. The work of four white women writers—Florence Crannell Means, Ann Nolan Clark, Marguerite de Angeli, and Lois Lenski—is used as an example of the fiction created by outsiders to introduce often invisible cultures into this literature.

INTRODUCTION

When one examines books for young people published during the first half of the twentieth century, it is clear that there was little or no multicultural literature within the United States available to young readers. Young Americans could more easily read about cultures of those in distant lands than they could about the various racial, ethnic, class, or religious differences within their own neighborhoods or nation. Undoubtedly, each of these groups of people had their own stories within their cultures, but the publishing community was not yet making these stories available to the larger dominant culture. Of course, there were selections from folktales and other forms of traditional stories in the mainstream of children's literature, but realistic portrayals of other than white middle class suburban life were generally unavailable. As a result, large numbers of American youth, not just those of color,¹ could not recognize themselves in the literature supposedly created for them.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF FEMINIST SCHOLARS AND CRITICS

The work of feminist scholars and critics seems to be a logical beginning for discussion of multicultural literature for children and youth. Women have dominated the field of youth literature as editors, librarians, teachers, and mothers and most often served as direct intermediaries between children and books in spite of the male-dominated centers of money and power in the publishing community. As Alice Kessler-Harris (1992), the director of the Women's Studies Program at Rutgers University, writes:

An approach that respects and incorporates diverse cultural traditions is essential to the women's studies enterprise. . . . Without a commitment to multiculturalism, it would be impossible to separate what is gender specific from what is culturally particular. (p. 795)

In many ways, the history of the development of multicultural literature for children is similar to feminist theories in that a primary focus is on the subjects' need to define themselves rather than be defined by others. African-American feminist literary critic Barbara Christian (1985) elaborates on this point:

As poor, woman, and black, the Afro-American woman had to generate her own definition in order to survive, for she found that she was forced to deny essential aspects of herself to fit the definition of others. If defined as black, her woman nature was often denied; if defined as woman, her blackness was often ignored; if defined as working class, her gender and race were muted. It is primarily in the expressions of herself that she could be her totality. (p. 161)

Correspondingly, how must young people of color react to be defined by others when they are also often poor, working class, and often female as well as powerless. Young readers frequently lack even the very basic powers of expressive language which allows one to define and create oneself.

ISSUES OF MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE FOR YOUTH

A number of issues arise when examining multicultural literature for young people. First is the concern about insiders versus outsiders, whether these stories are by or just about members of the minority culture.² Historically, the majority of works about African-Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and other minorities have been written by those outside the culture. This can be positive in that it introduces greater numbers of young readers to cultures other than their own, but it can be negative if the cultural content is biased, misinformed, or inadequately comprehended. In recent years, more and more critics have indicated that only those who are members of the culture or insiders can truly represent their culture in literary works. One cannot deny that children's and young adult literature would benefit from greater numbers of racial and ethnic minorities

writing for young people. The belief that only one of a culture can write authentically about that culture, however, would deny the very nature of aesthetic composition and perhaps eliminate the whole field of children's literature which is, of course, almost always written by adults. It is true that adults were once children, but, nonetheless, the insider argument, if carried to its logical conclusion, would result in a literary canon composed solely of autobiographies. It is no more reasonable to expect that a single African-American author, often from middle-class society, can, because of his or her cultural heritage, get inside the characters and situations of all those who share skin color or national origins any more than a single Caucasian author could adequately recreate the lives of all those many different peoples who share that identity. It is also true that outsiders, largely white women writers of the early twentieth century, paved the way for the multicultural children's literature both by and about various peoples available today.

Another issue is that of uniqueness versus universality. In one sense, all literature is accessible to others because it deals, in some way, with the commonality of human experience. It is equally true, however, that each character is a unique being shaped by a myriad of factors, not just by race, color, or ethnicity. In the beginnings of multicultural literature for children in this country, universality and commonality were stressed. Lyn Miller-Lachmann (1992), in the introduction to *Our Family, Our Friends, Our World: An Annotated Guide to Significant Multicultural Books for Children and Young People*, describes two parallel trends in recent publishing about minorities in the United States and Canada (p. 9). One is the type of book in which the minority characters are "essentially indistinguishable from middle-class white ones. . . . In such books, images of minorities are positive, though little of their heritage is shown" (p. 9). What these books emphasize, therefore, is not people's differences but their similarities. At the same time, there are many more books about minority characters which "focus exclusively on questions related to heritage, conflicts and issues within the minority community, and culturally specific developmental issues" (p. 9). Miller-Lachmann points to books about African-Americans dealing with class differences based on skin color, body type, or hair, or stories of immigrants in which distinctions are made based on the time of arrival in America or the region of the home country from which they came. Only when both of these types of stories are available for all peoples and in large numbers will literature for young people be truly multicultural.

A third and very controversial issue is that of literary or aesthetic criteria. Members of the dominant culture have often excluded works

by talented minorities on the basis that they do not meet accepted literary standards without recognizing or acknowledging that aesthetic standards are themselves cultural. Molly Hite (1989) writes:

Stories in the modern sense are always *somebody's* stories: even when they have a conventionally omniscient narrator they entail a point of view, take sides....One immediate consequence is that even though conventions governing the selection of narrator, protagonist, and especially plot restrict the kinds of literary production that count as stories in a given society and historical period, changes in emphasis and value can articulate the "other side" of a culturally mandated story, exposing the limits it inscribes in the process of affirming a dominant ideology. (p. 4)

INTERACTIVE PHASES OF CURRICULAR REVISION

Peggy McIntosh's (1983) "interactive phases of curricular revision" describes the study of history as progressing from (1) "Womanless History" to (2) "Women in History" to (3) "Women as a Problem, Anomaly or Absence in History" to (4) "Women As History" and finally to (5) "History Redefined or Reconstructed to Include Us All" (McIntosh, 1983, pp. 1, 3).

Phase 1: Cultural Conformity

If one substitutes "cultural diversity" or "people of color" for "women" in the above statements, the first phases at least seem to be a fairly accurate representation of the history of cultural diversity in literature for young people during the first half of the twentieth century. In phase one, the dominant white middle-class culture is presented as if all the world were one homogeneous group or at least as if all those who differ are unworthy of inclusion and, therefore, remain invisible. This deletion of significant portions of society in the literature presented to children has been a serious distortion of the understanding of the world.

Phase 2: People of Color in History

In phase two, a few people of other cultures are included in the mainstream of children's literature, but these few are those who have "made it" in the white, middle-class world—that is, those who are acceptable within the standards of the dominant culture. This phase supports the old fashioned melting pot notion of culture which assumes that the aim of all peoples is to become just like everyone else. Of course, the "everyone else" of this statement are those who dominate the social and cultural products of the nation. Thus a few biographical and fictional accounts of exceptional members of various peoples outside the dominant culture are presented to young people to demonstrate that it is possible to adapt oneself to, and achieve success in, the white middle-class world. This may have been a necessary step toward the acceptance of multiculturalism in children's

literature, but it also carried with it the not so subtle message that one must repress aspects of a personal heritage and accommodate oneself to the acceptable image of American society to be included. In becoming visible to the world, it was necessary for people of color to maintain the invisibility of much of their own culture, that with which unrepresented populations of young people might have identified. The acceptance of this early stage of cultural diversity in children's literature assumed both this kind of denial of cultural uniqueness and a kind of didacticism which conveyed that if only one tried hard enough, he (or sometimes she) would "make it" in the white middle-class male world. Feminist scholars note the special difficulties encountered by women of color in that white male world.

It is particularly interesting to look at children's literature, a field traditionally dominated by women editors, in this regard. On the one hand, women outside the primary culture because of their color, class, religion, or ethnicity had the added burden of gender working against them. On the other hand, it may have been true, in some instances, that women were more easily accepted into the mainstream literature than their male counterparts because their gender made them less of a threat to the status quo. It follows, therefore, that young protagonists from minority cultures, male as well as female, might have been more easily accepted than their adult counterparts because of the assumed powerlessness of young people. This is certainly a topic for further investigation.

*Phase 3: Cultural Diversity as a Problem,
Anomaly or Absence in History*

Phase three in this development is characterized by a heightened social consciousness, recognizing that diverse peoples are not a visible part of the norm. There is anger at this discrimination and at the barriers that are set up to exclude whole groups of people. Many of the problem novels which dominated children's literature beginning during the social unrest of the 1960s are examples of this phase in the history of cultural diversity in literature for young people. This was a period of major breakthroughs in children's literature when publishers rushed to assure the proper complement of African-Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans as well as characters of other religious or national origins in books for children. Problems of prejudice and segregation were prominent in many of these stories. Alternately, it was common at that time to have contrived groups of one WASP, one African-American, one Jew, and one Asian American acting as a group protagonist in books for young readers. Sometimes these stories had little or no reflection of the various cultures supposedly represented in spite of the obvious intention to demonstrate that different peoples can live and play together in a harmonious multicultural world.

Phase 4: Cultural Diversity as History

One might make a case for the fact that, in the late 1970s, children's publishing in this country began to move into McIntosh's phase four in which the lives of all peoples are acknowledged and respected. At this time, stories about young people of various cultures moved from the very obvious "minority status as problem" to more realistically portrayed stories of all kinds of people going about the everyday business of living. Transferring McIntosh's statements about women to those of other cultures, readers and scholars in this phase no longer ask, Did members of other cultures write anything good? or What great works by people of other cultures can we include? Rather, it is assumed that all peoples have their own literatures and ask What did others write? or How have other cultures told their stories? In attempting to answer these questions, publishers sought new authors who could project the authentic voices of their cultures to established white middle-class American audiences as well as to their own people. There was limited success in this effort. Some people of color, particularly African-Americans such as John Steptoe, Virginia Hamilton, Alice Childress, and Walter Dean Myers, did break into the mainstream publishing community, but these exceptionally talented writers might have been included in phase two as exemplary minorities acceptable within the highest standards of all literature.

Unfortunately, progress through phase four toward a truly multicultural literature for young people slowed—in fact, almost reversed itself—during the 1980s when the number of books by and about people of color decreased (Myers, 1985, p. 224). There have been, however, signs that progress toward a multicultural world of children's and young adult literature is again moving through a period corresponding to the fourth phase of McIntosh's schema. In order to fulfill the promise of this stage of development, we must recover the lost literary canon, just as feminist literary critics have rediscovered early works of women writers. To locate lost works of other cultures, we might search out small publishers and church archives and encourage writers of color to record some of the oral narratives of their people to be published either by these small specialized presses or through mainstream publishing channels.³ Perhaps by the beginning of the twenty-first century we will have made real progress toward the final fifth phase in which literature for young people will be redefined or reconstructed to include the literary texts of all peoples.

EARLY HISTORY OF MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE FOR YOUTH

Those concerned about multicultural literature for young people might understand and appreciate these stages of development more

fully by looking back to phase two in the early part of this century. During the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, there were a few authors who recognized the need to provide a more inclusive cultural perspective in realistic literature for children and young people. The first edition of May Hill Arbuthnot's (1947) classic text *Children and Books* gives some indication of the status of multiculturalism in children's literature at that time. Arbuthnot devoted six pages to "Negroes"⁴ and "North American Indians" and then went on to discuss "other minority groups" including migrant workers, "Southern mountaineers," and "stories about so-called 'aliens,' a sad word for the newcomers to our shores." She states that:

The United States has a growing body of delightful realistic stories about the various minority groups. A few of these books are overearnest with too much emphasis on the problem of the group, but more and more they are becoming free from self-consciousness and they tell a good story light-heartedly. Perhaps this should be our criterion: whether the story is about an Amish, a Negro, an immigrant Italian, or an Indian child, it should be a good story and the characters should appeal to children from all groups. (pp. 380-81)

Although the social consciousness of the 1990s would cause today's reader to take issue with both the terminology and the tone of Arbuthnot's work, she was a leader for her time and much that she wrote in the 1940s still holds true today. For instance, in expressing concerns about "stories which hold up to the Negro child only the poverty stricken and the less educated members of its group," she states that:

White children may laugh over Augustus' vagrant family,^[5] because they have dozens of books about more sensible and successful families. They can enjoy drawings of white children which are almost caricatures, like Louis Slobodkin's *Moffats* and Robert McCloskey's *Lentil*, because they have dozens of other books in which white children are shown to be idealistically beautiful and noble. In order to laugh at ourselves wholeheartedly, we must feel secure socially and confident personally. (p. 381)

What was true in 1947 is equally true today. Arbuthnot's comment also points to a very problematic area of consideration concerning books about other cultures—i.e., the fact that the critical acceptance of any one particular book is, in some part, dependent upon the total body of literature about that culture available to children. Perhaps we will have reached McIntosh's fifth phase of a totally reconstructed literature inclusive of all peoples when children of various cultures can admire, respect, be angry at, and laugh wholeheartedly at both those who share their heritages and those from very different cultures. For this to come about, there must be a vast array of stories which represent the various aspects of each

culture as fully as white middle-class youngsters are able to find their people in the books they read.

A number of women writers of the 1930s and 1940s made tremendous contributions to the beginnings of multicultural children's literature. Although these women could not be called feminists as we use the term today, they did exhibit many of the characteristics of feminism in their work, especially their concern for cooperation, connectedness, caring, diversity, and multiculturalism in a style that is associative and nonhierarchical.

Women's studies has enabled us to see in all areas what we've come to call the "invisible paradigms" of the academic system and the larger cultural context that marginalize or trivialize the lives of all women, the lives of Blacks and of ethnic minorities, and those outside the dominant class or culture. (Schuster & Van Dyne, 1983, p. 1)

Florence Crannell Means and Ann Nolan Clark repeatedly challenged those invisible paradigms that marginalized or trivialized the lives of young people separated from the primary culture by race, class, or ethnicity. They were prolific writers who specialized in stories about "outsiders" in our society, recognizing their similarities to others while celebrating the differences. As Norma Klein (1981) said much later: "The purpose of fiction is not to force any way of life on an unsuspecting reader. It is rather to make people transcend the boundaries of their own identity to understand in an intuitive or feeling way what it is like to be someone else" (p. 358). Means and Clark, along with their contemporaries Marguerite de Angeli and Lois Lenski, certainly transcended their own boundaries and have helped generations of children to do the same.

Florence Crannell Means was truly a leader in introducing young readers to other cultures. Transcending one's own boundaries to view life through the eyes of another is not an unusual goal of writers, but to do so steadily, creatively, and thoroughly for one marginalized group after another, as Florence Crannell Means did for African-Americans, Japanese Americans, Mexicans, migrant workers, and various Native American peoples for more than three decades is an accomplishment worthy of note. A rereading of many of her books for young people reveals the expected datedness of terminology and tone, but these stories continue to speak to the same human concerns of society's outsiders today as they did more than fifty years ago. In 1945, Anne Carroll Moore wrote the following:

It is her clear-sighted outlook upon the childhood and youth of many races scattered over this great country, her willingness to approach unfamiliar environments and peoples, to learn rather than to contrast, to identify herself with the emotions of youth, rather than to discuss or dissect them, which set Florence Crannell Means' books apart from those written to order from racial backgrounds. (p. 109)

Means always referred to her childhood and the fact that her father, a Baptist minister, had "visitors of every kind and color" in their home as the beginnings of her appreciation of, and respect for, various peoples. She began her literary career writing and illustrating stories about minority children for religious presses. Her first full-length novels, a trilogy including *A Candle in the Mist* (1931), *Ranch and Ring* (1932), and *A Bowlful of Stars* (1934a), tell of the life of Janey Grant, a young pioneer whose westward travels were based on the life of Means's maternal grandmother. Grant's pioneer spirit was later reflected in the more than thirty stories, biographies, and plays based on Means's yearly visits to various Native American tribes and to other remote areas in this country inhabited by African-American, Hispanic, and Asian American peoples. Means (1940) believed that "the writer must herself deeply know the people she's writing about. She must go to them—when they are of her day—and be of them as well as among them" (p. 35). In discussing what she called the "mosaic" of the United States, she began with historic groups of the past.

Quite as vivid as the past, though, is the present with its varicolored racial groups, aboriginal and imported; and, shifting kaleidoscopically across the pattern of brights and darks, the continual trek of our migrant workers. It's since I've grown acquainted with the children of one after another of these groups that I've begun to harbor a deep desire: to fix this mosaic of American youth between booklids, one motif at a time. (p. 35)

For the next thirty years, Means did just that.

Means's view of multiculturalism, typical of the relatively few concerned and committed persons of that time, probably corresponded to McIntosh's phase two in which "others" were to be integrated into the primary culture. In a presentation to the Iowa Library Association, Means (1946a) remarked:

That brings us to the minority groups, and to the desire that has grown deep and burning in my own heart. That is the desire to present to our own white boys and girls the boys and girls of other races, other creeds and colors; to present them as just "folks," only superficially different from each other and from ourselves. To me this understanding of all peoples is the deepest need of a critical era; and, indeed, its only hope. (p. 87)

Today we consider "integration" to be a kind of cultural captivity in which those who are integrated give up aspects of their own identity in order to become a part of the primary culture. Now we are more likely to use terms such as "diversity" and "multiculturalism" to indicate the need to retain one's own cultural identity in a rich kaleidoscopic mix of peoples. "The task for the 1990s was to learn to appreciate differences and yet to eliminate them as the basis for

distributing power and privilege" (Davis, 1991, p. 384). In many of her books, written in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, Means did appreciate, even celebrate, differences among cultures. She also explored differences within cultures, but, as an author of realistic fiction, she also reflected the racial attitudes of those times in her work. Feminist scholars insist that a real redistribution of power and privilege will come about only when society deconstructs the white male hierarchies in which one succeeds by rising above others and reconstructs a network of connective relationships in which each member supports every other in a diverse, responsive, and inclusive society. For most people at the time that Means was writing for young people, such a society was virtually inconceivable, but she came close to achieving it in some of her stories.

Means was one of the first authors for young people to write realistically of African-Americans in America. *Shuttered Windows*, published in 1938, was certainly ahead of its time in its portrayal of class differences within racial boundaries. *The New York Times* review of *Shuttered Windows* stated:

In this, her latest book for older girls, she [Means] has undertaken a theme which has heretofore, so far as I know, been treated only in adult fiction, that of the educated Negro in relation to the more backward members of the race, and she has handled it in such universal terms as to appeal to schoolgirls of any race. (Buell, 1938, p. 10)

Means (1948) frequently stated her belief that, in order to write about other races or ethnic groups, one must spend enough time in a region "so that it becomes friend rather than acquaintance; so that you know it rather than know about it" (p. 107). After only a few weeks in the islands off the Carolina coast, however, the Gullah girls in the Mather school she was visiting asked her to write a book about them. In order to do so, she created a protagonist, Harriet Freeman, who left her cultured and advantaged home in Minneapolis to stay with her great-grandmother who, although she could not read or write, had a strength and nobility Harriet admired. Thus her main character was of the people but also first perceived them as an outsider looking into the lives of others. The poverty, the ignorance, and the superstition of her people are gradually offset by their goodness and strength, by the beauty of the island, and by the devotion of the teachers who worked to overcome the severe limitations of the school for "colored" girls. Great-grandmother's stories of "Moses Out of Arabia" and Harriet's growing friendship with Richie, the young agriculture student who wants to help his people, make Harriet realize that she too could help to open the "shuttered windows" for these people she had come to love and accept as her own.⁶ Wilhelmina Crosson (1940) wrote:

As a Negro woman, I feel *Shuttered Windows* no mere "flash in the pan" of books for young people, but a highly significant contribution to American juvenile literature. How gratifying to find a white woman who through her great tolerance has been able to treat so objectively, so sanely, and with such sympathetic understanding the life of a Negro girl. When one finishes *Shuttered Windows* one feels a piercing tenderness—an intimacy which causes one's enthusiasm to mount and to soar. (p. 324)

Suzanne Rahn (1987) remarks on Means being well ahead of her time when she creates a protagonist, Harriet, who is black, but also "strong, proud, and beautiful—in ways that reflect not only her individuality but her racial heritage." Rahn goes on to write: "As she talked with the students at Mather, Means must have sensed their need to find pride in their own racial heritage; in the characters of Harriet and Black Moses, she suggests—surely an unusual suggestion in the 1930s—that such pride is not only valid but necessary for their progress as a people" (p. 104).

One of the most interesting aspects of research into Means's work is the exchange of letters between her and Arna Bontemps in which she asks Bontemps for assistance in the creation of dialogue for her characters. The Bontemps Collection of the George Arents Research Library at Syracuse University contains approximately forty letters to and from, but mostly from, Florence Crannell Means written between 1937 and 1963. The earliest of these letters from Means, dated July 24, 1937, begins with "congratulations to the writer of so charming a book as *Sad-Faced Boy*." She goes on to say:

I was especially charmed with your handling of dialogue. To avoid all the pitfalls and hurdles of contractions and misspellings and yet preserve the savor, the tempo, the rhythm—I myself have been seeking a solution of the problem which you have answered so brilliantly. I am writing a book for older teen age girls, set on the campus of one of the schools in South Carolina, largely attended by Negro girls from the coast and the sea islands. (Means to Bontemps, personal communication, July 24, 1937)

In another letter to Bontemps in November 1937, Means writes:

If you should happen to see my *Shuttered Windows*, when it comes out, you may disapprove entirely of my use of the dialect. I did use contractions and misspellings—though I understand your decting them and think your avoidance of them in *Sad-Faced Boy* a beautiful piece of work. My problem was a little different. In the first place, I am writing the book for teen age girls; in the second place, one of the points I want to get across is that individuals are individuals and to get that across I wanted to show that there is as much difference between the speech and custom of the Negro in Minneapolis and in Dafuskey as between any two groups anywhere.—But in the third place, such rendering of the dialect as you have accomplished requires a firmer hold on it than I have on the Gullah. (Means to Bontemps, personal communications, November 14, 1937)

In subsequent letters, Means again justifies her use of dialect in *Shuttered Windows*, writing in explanation:

But I've placed them [distortions and contractions] in the mouths of the uneducated characters in the story, as I should do with uneducated characters of any race—wishing especially to point to the fact that individuals are individuals, and that the Negro population presents the same range of education and ability as the white, but with far more restricted opportunity. (Means to Bontemps, personal communications, July 28, 1938)

Means asks Bontemps for help with background information for "another Negro book" in a letter dated April 22, 1942, in which she raises the question of whether the Booker T. Washington philosophy at Tuskegee would be acceptable. An April 28, 1942, letter from Bontemps to Means responds to this query and provides information on Negro colleges which might serve as settings for that novel. Bontemps writes:

My feeling is that Fisk and Atlanta and Bennett carry the traditions that are most acceptable to literate Negroes, where colleges for girls are concerned. The Booker T. Washington slant on industrial education is still approved, but I think that many Negroes like to think of Tuskegee as mainly a boy's school. I can't imagine what sort of career your heroine will select, but that would also be a factor. Atlanta has a school of social work, a library school, teaching courses, and the like. (Bontemps to Means, personal communications, April 28, 1942)

Bontemps was not the only one to whom Means turned for criticism prior to publication in an effort to make her books about other cultures ring true. She returned to the girls at the Mather school where she had been asked to write *Shuttered Windows* and gave prizes to those who criticized her manuscript. Her letters to Bontemps reveal that the manuscript for *Great Day in the Morning* (1946b) was revised in response to the comments of three writer friends and then returned to its original state when her editor preferred the earlier version and Bontemps and Charlemae Rollins did not find fault with it.

In *Great Day in the Morning*, twenty year old Lilybelle Lawrence has to choose between teaching and nursing. She also learns that misunderstandings can cause problems between races, but that good manners and right conduct can lead to respect. In this book, even more than in *Shuttered Windows*, the use of dialect may distract or disturb readers, but it is deftly handled in this serious story of a young minority character.

In 1945, Means won the Child Study Association Award for *The Moved-Outers*, a sensitive story of the evacuation and internment of a Japanese American girl and her family during World War II. In 1946, this book won a Newbery Honor. The author had previously written about the problems of Japanese assimilation in America in *Rainbow Bridge* (1934b), but it was the Ohara family of *The Moved-Outers* who touched the raw nerves of a war torn nation. Means met and talked with young California evacuees who were forced to

live behind barbed wire fences in the Amache relocation camp near her Colorado home and wrote this story at a time when many Americans were unaware of, or unwilling to acknowledge, what was happening to these U.S. citizens.

As this story opens, Sue Ohara is looking forward to a typical teenager's weekend. Kim, her younger brother, had just won a high school debate with his fiery exhortations of patriotism, and Sue was looking forward to Christmas and then winning a scholarship and "four glorious years" in college (p. 7). Both Sue and Kim were bright and popular young people, but Sue fit into high school society as an All-American girl in spite of her Japanese heritage, while brother Kim stood somewhat apart and worried about the time when they would be "out of college into real life" (Means, 1945, p. 8). The first chapter ends with the author's comment: "Everyone has a shadow; everyone with substance, amounting to anything. And your shadow is as much a part of you as the shape of your eyes and the color of your hair" (Means, 1945, p. 8). Unfortunately, the day was Friday, December 5, 1941, and by Sunday the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought the shadow descending on even the most loyal Americans with a particular shape of eyes and color of hair.

Howard Pease (1945), in a *Horn Book* article, praised Means's treatment of this sensitive period of our nation's history:

Young Americans will find good reading in Mrs. Means' story of a loyal Japanese-American family. It is her best book, beautifully written, profoundly moving, yet restrained. And it possesses that rare quality of saying something about our world today, here at home. It explains and interprets, it enlarges our sympathy and understanding, and it makes plain that the story of Sue and Jiro has implications far more important than what happens to one family or to one minority group. Possibly it is already late for us to decide that from now on we must be more forthright in our treatment of controversial subjects in our books for young people. Let us hope it is not too late. The reception accorded *The Moved-Outers* will be a test of our own intelligence and our own integrity. (p. 17)

The reception to *The Moved-Outers* proved to be a mixed one. In spite of its literary awards, many schools and libraries did not purchase this book. Anti-Japanese feelings, even against the Nisei or those born and educated in this country, still ran high at its time of publication on February 28, 1945, especially on the West Coast where large numbers of Japanese Americans had been very successful prior to Pearl Harbor. There has always been the suspicion that it was, at least in part, personal greed and racial prejudice directed against these successful "foreign-looking" immigrants which helped to fuel the negative feelings toward these citizens. When Japanese Americans were relocated, their property was often sold to others for less than its actual value. Those more sympathetic to the Nisei

were often embarrassed by the actions of this country's War Relocation Authority and did not want to expose their shameful actions to young people. For these reasons, *The Moved-Outers* did not achieve the readership or visibility it deserved and was, for a long time, one of those Newbery Honor books available but not generally known by young people.

Similar stories of Japanese American relocation during World War II began appearing in the early 1970s and brought Means's book back into consideration by those concerned with multicultural books for children and young people. Yoshiko Uchida's (1971) *Journey to Topaz* is based on the author's own experiences during this tragic period of history. The protagonist is much younger than Sue of *The Moved-Outers*, but otherwise the parallels between these two stories are amazing. This is especially true when one considers that they were written almost thirty years apart, the first, an outsider's observations during the heat of a terrible occurrence and the latter, an adult insider's reflections on her childhood experiences. Also in 1971, Japanese Canadian artist and author Shizuye Takashima's *A Child in Prison Camp* was released. This account of her experiences in a Canadian internment camp, poignantly presented in paintings as well as in words, was named the "Best Illustrated Book of the Year" by the Canadian Association of Children's Librarians the following year. Subsequently, *A Child in Prison Camp* (1974) was published in the United States and in many other countries and has won a number of additional awards.⁷

In the 1980s, the case of United States versus Hohri, a 1983 class action suit by survivors of Japanese American internment camps, brought this dark period of American history to light for many, including young people. The legal and moral questions surrounding these events were debated in newspapers in both popular and scholarly articles and in adult books during this decade,⁸ and they also began to receive more attention in books for children. Daniel S. Davis's (1982) *Behind Barbed Wire: The Imprisonment of Japanese-Americans During World War II* and John Tateishi's (1984) *And Justice for All: An Oral History of the Japanese-American Detention Camps* present young readers with thoughtful realistic accounts of relocation camps. Sheila Hamanaka's (1990) *The Journey: Japanese Americans, Racism, and Renewal* uses a spectacular and beautifully detailed five-panel mural to present Japanese American history with an emphasis on the American concentration camps of World War II. The powerfully evocative visual experience and thought-provoking narrative of this book provides young people today with the kind of aesthetic encounter with this painful ordeal from our history that was not possible during the actual time of occurrence.

The Moved-Outers was a landmark book, one that dealt with this difficult topic during its own time and opened the door for these more recent books for young people. It is unlikely that any book on this subject written by a Japanese American would have been published in the 1940s or 1950s (the McCarthy period was certainly a recognizable obstacle). It was not until almost thirty years after the onset of relocation that Japanese Americans who had been children in the camps began telling their stories. Florence Crannell Means, as a sympathetic outsider, had been the first to present this injustice to young readers long before those oppressed were able to tell their own stories. This was probably true for most marginalized or oppressed peoples; someone from the outside had to tell their stories first before they were able to make their own voices heard. Sundquist (1988) writes in his assessment of the internment camps that:

there can be little question that the internment, however sound its motivations must have seemed at the time, was wrong and that a debt is owed Japanese Americans. The repayment of that debt cannot be made with money alone; it must also include apologies based on a clear historical understanding. (p. 547)

It is precisely this clear historical understanding that is critical to our young people. It is noteworthy that it took almost fifty years for the American government to first recognize, then admit to, and finally accept responsibility for, its actions with regard to its citizens. Children need to know such things, and it was Means who first presented this horror to young people.

Means also dedicated a great deal of time and effort to her work with and about Native Americans. Year after year she spent as much time as possible living with the Navajo or Hopi peoples and was always very precise in distinguishing among the lifestyles and customs of various tribes. She wrote pamphlets about Native Americans for the Baptist Missionary Society, but she really brought them to life in her stories for young people. *Tangled Waters* (1936) is the story of Altolie, a fifteen-year-old Navajo who had to rebel against her grandmother's wishes to get an education in the white school. Many details of Navajo beliefs and customs are woven sensitively into this story, showing the beauty as well as the harshness of this way of life. In a winter of famine, Altolie would have married a wealthy but unpleasant young Navajo gambler if a Boy she had met at school had not come to her rescue. The Boy was trying to learn the ways of white society so that he could combine the best of these ways with the best of his own Navajo heritage. The view of white culture presented in this work would be perceived as over-romanticized today,

but *Tangled Waters* was a very forward-looking book for its overall treatment of, and respect for, Native Americans at its time of publication.

A more somber view of Native American life is found in Means's *The Rains Will Come* (1954). The setting is a Hopi village in the midst of a severe two-year drought. Young Lohmay is obsessed with the thought that his irreverence toward Hopi religious symbols brought this punishment on his people. When the villagers confess their sins, however, he discovers that his own are very small. The power of this story is in its beautiful prose and in the authentic portrayal of Hopi life, especially their deep religious feelings, close-knit family life, and strength in times of trouble. There is humor here but *The Rains Will Come* also pictures a darker side of Native American life. Black and white illustrations by Hopi artist Fred Kabotie complement Means's text and add credibility to her treatment of this way of life.

Fifteen years later, Means published an even darker view of Hopi life. In *Our Cup Is Broken* (1969), Sarah left her village to live in the white world when she was orphaned at age eight. At age twenty she returns and finds that the world she remembers no longer exists. She finds it impossible to live in the white world but neither could she be comfortable with her Hopi people; she has no home. Sarah is raped, bears a blind child, marries for protection without love, and gives birth to a stillborn child. Thus, the tragedy is somewhat overstated, but Sarah is a compelling and believable character who demonstrates the personal cost of a culture that appears to be vanishing.

In addition to books about African-Americans, Japanese Americans, and Native Americans, Means wrote stories about other "outsiders" in American society. Mexican Americans, Spanish Americans, Chinese Americans, and migrant workers have all been honestly and sympathetically portrayed in her work. She was a pioneer in writing realistic stories about minorities for young readers. While she valued the uniqueness of each of these cultures, it is clear that she believed that all human beings are basically the same under the skin. Although this kind of "melting pot" view of the world is only at McIntosh's phase two and is no longer generally acceptable, Means's work was a giant step forward toward the kind of multicultural literature represented by McIntosh's fifth phase.

One of the best known writers of Native American stories for young people from the 1940s into the 1970s was Ann Nolan Clark. In *Journey to the People*, Clark (1969) wrote:

My concern is for Indian children, because racial differences are greater than those of nationalities. Generally, differences in traditions and

customs can be met to mutual satisfaction with mutual generosity and humor. Differences of concepts, however, are more difficult to understand and more difficult to accept. I believe there are four Indian *group* concepts that differ greatly from concepts in our group pattern. These are the Indian feeling about land, about work, about time, and about the spiritual life. (p. 19)

The author goes on to explain these four concepts, and throughout her long career as teacher and writer she was careful to honor Native American traditions and beliefs.

Clark's first books for children were bilingual textbooks written for the children she taught for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. *In My Mother's House* (1941) was written with and for five Tewa children in the Tesuque Pueblo in Santa Fe and was first called *Home Geography* because that is what it was. Both the author and the children she taught were dissatisfied with the textbooks available to them. Most were alien to their ways, and even the stories of their people were told from a white perspective, explaining what was already known, and often best left unsaid, to Native American youngsters. The Director of Indian Education, Willard Beatty, was so impressed with *Home Geography* that he sent it to children's book editor May Massee who saw its appeal for a larger audience and published it as *In My Mother's House*.

In My Mother's House has a rhythmic simplicity and a sensitivity to the details of the everyday life of the Pueblo people. Its cadence, reflecting the speech patterns of these Native Americans, and its short sentences made it an ideal reader, and its gentle reverence for their way of life made it an ideal introduction to that life for others. The poetic beauty of this work cries out to be read aloud.

My heart is the holding-place,
 My heart is the keeping-place
 For the things I know
 About that lake in the mountains.
 Always will I keep
 In my heart
 The things that belong there,
 As lakes
 Keep water
 For the people (p. 24).

Little Navajo Bluebird (1943) is one of Clark's many stories of young Native Americans caught up in the struggle between their own culture and the dominant white culture which tempts them to leave their homes and their people. This is the story of Doli, the little Bluebird of the title, who must decide whether to leave the

hogan and go to the white school that seems to have completely "Americanized" her older brother and is about to take her sister. Like *In My Mother's House*, this book is a celebration of a particular form of Native American life closely attuned to nature and the seasons. May Lamberton Becker's (1943) review of *Little Navajo Bluebird* says:

Mrs. Clark shows in her new book the same qualities that gave distinction to her earlier work. These are first of all the capacity to identify herself spiritually with the Navajo scheme of things, while retaining the power of looking at it from the outside. This is a gift rare enough to call for special tools by which to carry it out; these are provided by her other distinguishing quality—ability, whether natural or acquired and probably both, to speak and write in the Navajo rhythm and with these turns of phrase. (p. 8)

Secret of the Andes (1952), which won the Newbery Medal, is probably Clark's best known work. This quietly beautiful, almost mystical, tale of Cusi, the Peruvian boy who, with Chuto, the old herder, guards the llamas high in the Andes, introduces readers to the history, the mythology, and the music of the Incas. The sense of solitude and of mystery—a mystery of ideas rather than action—along with Clark's lyrical prose, may make this a difficult book for some of today's young readers who are used to the fast action and visual stimulation of television. Adults who share books with young people, however, might introduce this story by reading it aloud, encouraging listeners to savor the sound, the pacing, and the sensitivity of this tale.

Santiago (1955) is the story of an Indian boy of Guatemala who leaves the Spanish foster home in which he was raised to experience the lifestyle of his own people. During the five years of his travels, Santiago meets many people and tries out many lifestyles, each described with loving detail, until finally he decides to return to his own village to help the young people there. Anne Carroll Moore (1955) called this book "a triumphant story of a living, growing boy in today's world and adds another cubit to Mrs. Clark's stature as a writer" (p. 178). Another reviewer said:

Once you accept the compulsion of the boy Santiago to leave his gentle foster home to lead the primitive life of the Indian, you find yourself saying, "the greatest Clark yet." Not even in "Secret of the Andes" is the boy's reaction to life so poignant, the feeling of race so strong, the conception of beauty and mysticism so clarified. And all this in a book for young people in a thoroughly normal and fascinating story. (Johnson, 1955, p. 1510)

Ann Nolan Clark wrote many other books about Native American peoples, but she also created stories of young people of Costa Rica, South Vietnam, Finland, and Ireland as well as retelling a Vietnamese version of Cinderella. In 1963, Clark was awarded the Regina Medal which honors the body of her work.

Like Florence Crannell Means, Clark credits her childhood experiences with many different peoples for her ability to identify with, and sensitively portray, the lives of those of races and cultures different from her own. She was born and raised in Las Vegas, New Mexico, a frontier town where she met people from various states who clung to their European roots—French trappers, colonial Spaniards, Native Americans, Jews, and Irishmen—such as her own father and grandfather. In her Newbery acceptance speech, Clark (1955) spoke of her earliest memories of Native American culture and of her work as a teacher:

I have worked with Spanish children from New Mexico to Central and South America, with Indian children from Canada to Peru. I have worked with them because I like them. I write about them because their stories need to be told. All children need understanding, but children of segregated racial groups need even more. All children need someone to make a bridge from their world to the world of the adults who surround them. Indian children need this; they have the child problems of growing up, but also they have racial problems, the problems of conflicting interracial patterns between groups, and the conflicts of changing racial patterns within the group. (pp. 399-400)

Although increasing numbers of books for young people about Native American peoples have been published in the last two decades, most of them are still written by outsiders. Writers such as Paul Goble have been successful outsiders in the interpretation of the cultures of Native American peoples. His stories, drawn from the peoples of the Great Plains and the wonderful tales of the trickster Iktomi, offer an introduction to both the legends and culture of Native Americans. Russell Freedman's informational writing has chronicled in *Buffalo Hunt* (1988) the near destruction of the buffalo and the effects of this on native tribes. Virginia Hamilton's *Arilla Sun Down* (1976) tells the realistic story of Arilla who is part African-American and part Native American.

The 1980s have also brought some Native Americans into the mainstream of literature for young people. Te Ata's *Baby Rattlesnake* (1989) is a beautiful example of the translation of a traditional tale from the Chickasaw culture. Jamake Highwater's Ghost Horse trilogy—*Legend Days* (1984), *The Ceremony of Innocence* (1985), and *I Wear the Morning Star* (1986)—is written with the lyrical voice of a Native American.⁹ Louise Erdrich, part Ojibwa, has written a trilogy beginning with *Tracks* (1989), the first of the trilogy, although written last, *Love Medicine* (1984) and *The Beet Queen* (1986) which forms a realistic saga that begins in the nineteenth century and moves intergenerationally to the present. Thus we begin to see a new literature emerging but one not yet in the fullness of the McIntosh fifth phase.

Two other women writers born at the end of the nineteenth century helped to make dramatic changes in twentieth-century literature for young people by telling the stories of those previously invisible in the "all white world of children's books" (Larrick, 1965, p. 63).¹⁰ Although most of the characters in their books were white, Marguerite de Angeli and Lois Lenski did include children of many ethnic and religious groups and of migrant families previously unrepresented in this literature. Both de Angeli and Lenski were artists as was Florence Crannell Means, and their keen observations of various peoples were captured in verbal as well as visual images. De Angeli did write one story of an African-American child which, although very dated by today's standards, was a breakthrough book in the history of multicultural literature for young children. The protagonist of *Bright April* (1946) is the daughter of a close comfortable middle-class African-American family who first meets prejudice at age ten when a white girl refuses to sit beside her at a party. This book has been criticized because it is unlikely that April, who appears to move freely in white society, would have never before encountered racial prejudice. It has also been challenged because April, who says "I don't feel different," is indeed portrayed as just like her white friends in all but skin color. Even de Angeli's illustrations do not convey any real racial identity, but all her characters, similar to Kate Greenaway's before her, have basically the same sweet faces. Nonetheless, the creation of an African-American protagonist with whom young white children could identify was not a commonplace act for an author in the 1940s. De Angeli also wrote many other stories about minority children, especially those growing up near her Philadelphia home. Her belief that all children are basically alike comes through in her books about the Amish, Poles, Swedes, Quakers, Mennonites, and French Canadians. Even Robin, the hero of *The Door in the Wall*, de Angeli's Newbery award-winning novel set in thirteenth-century England, is a child who is "different"—in this story, one with a disability. De Angeli was also a winner of the Regina Medal, given by the Catholic Library Association, for the values expressed in the totality of her work.

Lois Lenski was another author who, in the 1940s, concentrated on introducing young readers to the different groups of peoples living within the borders of the United States. Her Round-about-America series books were written as easy readers for middle elementary school children, and her Regional Series was written for slightly older readers. Lenski lived among the people she wrote about and recorded and sketched their lives with meticulous detail. Most of these books tell the stories of the less fortunate members of American society—the poor, the homeless, the undereducated. Two of her stories are

about Native Americans. *Little Sioux Girl* (1958) describes the harshness of life on a reservation in 1950, and *Indian Captive: The Story of Mary Jemison* (1941) is based on an actual capture of a young girl by the Senecas. This is not a negative portrayal of Native Americans, however, as Mary learns to value the Seneca people and decides to stay with them.

CONCLUSION

These four white middle-class women—Means, Clark, de Angeli, and Lenski—were among the most prolific of those who, although they could not entirely break the boundaries of the society in which they lived, cared enough to go out and live and work with others very different from themselves. When they absorbed as much as possible of those cultures, they told their stories in books for children, believing that it is with the young that tolerance and respect for all peoples must begin. In the words of contemporary feminist scholars, these prefeminist women were doing “women’s work”; they were working to create a more inclusive, a more caring world.

In this the last decade of the twentieth century, more and more young people can find reflections of themselves and their own cultures in the literature published for them. It is difficult to gain perspective on a particular time while living through it, but one hopes that history will prove that children’s literature has finally reached at least McIntosh’s fourth phase in which the stories of many peoples are told in a nonhierarchical tapestry of human lives. There is, nonetheless, still much to be accomplished before we reach her fifth phase in which all peoples are fully included, and the differences within cultures, as well as those among cultures, are available to readers both inside and outside those cultures.

As we look from the past to current and future trends in the history of multicultural literature for children and young people, the feminist perspective remains at least one useful lens with which to examine these works. Feminist theory has helped us to look at “the other side” of many issues, ideas, and disciplines and encourages us to accept, care about, and celebrate our differences while attempting to reconstruct a world that respects and nurtures all peoples. The ways in which women have defined themselves, as documented in feminist texts, may provide insight into how others outside the dominant culture have defined and empowered themselves. When American society acknowledges that, from a global perspective, those now called minorities are actually in the majority, our treatment of these peoples, in literature as in life, must change. Until that time, the acknowledged majority of women and the work of feminist scholars, often women of color or other oppressed groups finding

their own place in the mainstream culture may help others who have been ignored, marginalized, or victimized to be fully represented, accepted, and appreciated in literature for children and youth.

NOTES

¹ Although "people of color" is generally considered to be "politically correct" today, some believe that this phrase could be interpreted as patronizing, designed to make Americans perceive each other primarily in terms of race or color. This points out the difficulty in remaining "politically correct," a term which itself may rapidly become incorrect.

² Karen Patricia Smith, the editor of this *Library Trends* issue, provided the following definition in her letter of invitation to contribute to this issue: "The phrase 'Multicultural Literature in the United States'—refers directly to literary contributions by those individuals who are, according to U.S. Federal Government designation, members of 'minority' groups. These include African-American, Hispanic American, American Indian, or Alaskan Native, Asian American, or Pacific Islander groups who reside in the United States."

³ For instance, Canadian born author Paul Yee has drawn upon his Canadian Chinese heritage as well as on archives of the immigrants from China who lived and worked in Canada during the gold rush, the building of the transcontinental railway, and the settling of the West Coast in the nineteenth century to write *Tales From Gold Mountain* (1989).

⁴ Of the seven authors of these books included here, only two, Arna Bontemps and Jesse Jackson, were themselves African-American. Ann Terry, who also had published books for children, was not included. Florence Crannell Means was one of the seven listed by Arbuthnot.

⁵ This refers to a series of books by Le Grand Henderson about a poor white family who live in a shanty boat on the Mississippi River.

⁶ American Playhouse produced a film written and directed by Julie Dash entitled *Daughters of the Dust* which was aired on July 22, 1992. The visually entrancing film captures many of the images that Means included in her book.

⁷ In 1972 it won the "Best Illustrated Book of the Year" medal of the Canadian Association of Children's Librarians and "Look of Books" Design Award. A CBC Armistice Day program presented a dramatization nationally. In 1974, the Japanese edition won the Sankei Shimbun Literary Award, and in 1975, a musical play by Gekidan Fuji was produced in Tokyo.

⁸ For instance, *Beyond Words: Images From America's Concentration Camps* (1987) brings together a strong collection of illustration from the camps which vary in style and mix elements from both Eastern and Western cultures; John Hersey's "Behind Barbed Wire" (1988) describes the exclusion of the Japanese Americans during World War II in light of Reagan's signing of the American apology and reparation in 1987, and Eric Sundquist's "The Japanese-American Internment" (1988) is a reappraisal of the U.S. government's guilt in this issue.

⁹ Although these and other books by Highwater have been highly recommended, there has been some challenge to the author's status as a Native American. See "The Golden Indian" in the 1984 late summer issue of *Akwesasne Notes*, published by the Mohawk Nation, Rossetown, NY 13683 (Adams, 1984).

¹⁰ This term was first used by Nancy Larrick in her September 1965 *Saturday Review* article.

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A Tool for Change: Young Adult Literature in the Lives of Young Adult African-Americans

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ABSTRACT

AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUNG ADULTS face a great challenge. Many fight daily for mere physical survival. All struggle in one way or another for emotional wholeness in environments that militate against this. Statistics paint an appalling picture of deteriorating black family life, random and senseless violence in black urban ghettos, spreading poverty, death at an early age by gunshot, and rampant teenage pregnancy. While these problems are entrenched and seemingly intractable, a virtually untapped and neglected resource is available. At a time when multiculturalism is gaining a modicum of respect, young adult literature written from an authentic black cultural perspective can prove to be a valuable tool in helping black young adults achieve the skills and knowledge they require to succeed in this society. Because libraries, both public and school, have traditionally been the repositories of this literature, they have the responsibility to ensure that these books are more positively used.

Over the years, countless scholarly works have been written about the African-American experience. In addition to examining the African-American's place in American history, some scholars have taken special interest in the black family, black youth, and black urban life (Billingsley, 1968; Frazier, 1939; Glasgow, 1980; Glick & Mills, 1974; Gutman, 1976; Hill, 1973; Moynihan, 1965; Wilson, 1987). As early as 1908, W. E. B. DuBois wrote *The Negro American Family* and, years before that, described black life in the city of Philadelphia (1899). Since that time, except for that of a handful of scholars, interest

in these subjects has waxed and waned, invariably increasing after incidents of urban unrest and turmoil such as the riots of the 1960s. The most recent riot, occurring in Los Angeles in May 1992, and escalating incidences of senseless urban violence have combined to renew scholarly, as well as public, concern for discovering why such events occur.

One has only to look at statistical data compiled and interpreted in book form (Hacker, 1992) or data directly from the U.S. Bureau of the Census or from other government agencies to see why there might be unrest, despair, and even a sense of hopelessness in the black urban ghetto in general and among black young adults in particular. It is clear that these young people have much to contend with and have fewer and fewer tools to overcome the obstacles before them, obstacles that have the power to defeat them even before they are out of infancy. These are forces that weaken the black family, that undermine education, and that glorify violence.

The 1990 census report indicates that African-Americans make up 11.9 percent of the total population of this country, yet they disproportionately contribute to statistics which, when translated, portray the face of ongoing human tragedy. To begin with, almost two-thirds of all black babies are now born outside marriage. This means that a large percentage of black families are headed by females. In fact, 56.2 percent of all black families are headed by women and 55.1 percent of these women have never been married (Hacker, 1992, pp. 67-74). More disturbing is the tendency of black teenagers to begin sexual activity at a relatively early age. It is estimated that, by age fifteen, 68.6 percent of black teenagers have engaged in sexual intercourse. The results of this activity are that some 40.7 percent of all black teenage girls become pregnant by age eighteen. Some 99.3 percent of these girls elect to keep and raise their babies (p. 76). Many of these girls live in multigenerational households with a mother, other children, and the daughter's children (p. 72).

Perhaps the most devastating statistics have to do with the effect these lifestyle patterns have on the way many of these black families live. Fifty-six percent of black single parent families have incomes less than the poverty level of \$10,530 for a family of three. In fact, 39.8 percent of families receiving federally sponsored Aid for Dependent Children (AFDC) are black. This means that they are, because of income, relegated, for the most part, to substandard housing, inadequate health care, and inferior schools.

The litany continues, but the statistics concerning black men are particularly disturbing. Nationwide, 500,000 black men are serving time in jails and prisons for criminal offenses. More than 1 million have criminal records (p. 74). Violent death now accounts for more

deaths among young black men than any other cause. If a black man is fifteen to twenty-five years old, he is 3.25 times more likely to die than his black female counterpart. What is most dismaying is that the leading cause of death among black men in this age group is gunshot wounds (Hacker, 1992, p. 75).

Historically, African-Americans have, in very large numbers, been poor. In 1990, they made up 10.1 percent of the work force but received only 7.8 percent of all earnings. In that same year, the median income for all black families was \$21,423 as compared with \$36,915 for all white families. In 1990, 37 percent of all black families earned less than \$15,000 a year, and 44.8 percent of all black children lived below the poverty line (Hacker, 1992, pp. 98-99). Even with added education, there still remains an income disparity between blacks and whites. With a high school diploma, black men earn approximately \$797 for every \$1,000 earned by a white man with the same diploma. With a college degree, black men earn only \$798 compared with the \$1,000 earned by their white counterparts. Black women, on the other hand, are much closer to achieving parity with the earnings of white women at every educational level (Hacker, 1992, p. 95).

The majority of poor African-Americans live in the central cities of this country, and 70 percent are concentrated in low income neighborhoods. Here, it is difficult to find work or to get to the place of employment even if one is fortunate enough to have a job. With few factory jobs available—the mainstay of the black working class—unemployment remains high. The unemployment rate among blacks since 1974 has been in double digit figures. In 1983, it was at a high of 20 percent and has consistently remained twice that of the white unemployed (Hacker, 1992, pp. 102-03).

In the area of education, 63.3 percent of all black school-age children still attend segregated schools (Hacker, 1992, p. 162). This statistic reflects not only school segregation but housing segregation as well since blacks tend to be concentrated in predominantly black neighborhoods. Looking more closely at black school attendance patterns on a state by state basis, Illinois tops the list of segregated schools, with 83.2 percent of its black students attending segregated classes. New York is not too far behind, with 80.8 percent attending segregated schools, followed closely by Mississippi, with an 80.3 percentage rate (p. 163). To compound the problem, the schools that service these students are failing. The ills of the nation's public schools have been well documented (Kotlowitz, 1991; Kozol, 1991; Rist, 1973).

A brief look at crime statistics reveals that African-Americans make up 47 percent of those awaiting trial or serving short jail terms. More disheartening, blacks account for 40.1 percent of those prisoners on death row and 45.3 percent of the prisoners in state and federal

prisons. Blacks account for 61.2 percent of robbery arrests nationwide, 54.7 percent of all arrests for murder and manslaughter, and 43.2 percent of all arrests for rape. Most of the crimes committed by blacks were against the person or property of another black person (Hacker, 1992, pp. 180-81).

These statistics clearly indicate that the African-American family is under siege, that young blacks are especially vulnerable, and that tremendous and seemingly intractable problems are pandemic in the black community. Is it any wonder that a young African-American boy or girl might feel alienated from school and from home, that he or she might come to accept violence as a way of life and idleness as something to do? Is it surprising that a young black girl, seeking love and affection in the only way she knows how, might come to see having a baby as giving her life focus and meaning? Through the years, programs, services, and projects were introduced to the black community in hopes of improving lives. Most have failed if statistics can be believed.

Yet, there is a resource that can be enlisted in this battle to save black youth, and it is virtually an untapped commodity. This commodity is young adult literature. This literature can provide black young adults with a means of transcending racism and segregation, can lead them to self-discovery, and can help them eliminate whatever sense of isolation or alienation they may have. It can also help them overcome entrenched personal problems. And because the nation's libraries have traditionally been the repository of such literature, these are the institutions, both public and school libraries, that need to be recruited in this effort. It is the library that has a great responsibility, even greater than that of the schools, to see that this literature gets into the hands of the people who need it the most.

The idea that literature can be used for self-understanding, for understanding the human condition, and as an agent for change is not a new one. Robert Probst (1988) contends that, in the process of reading literature, some of the reader's concepts of the world are reaffirmed, modified, or even refuted, and that this can have the result of changing the reader. This reading of the text can be for the reader a process of self-creation, where, in searching for a response to the text, in responding, and in finding errors, the reader gains a greater sense of self. Here, atmosphere, suitability of the literature, reader receptivity, and textual reliability are crucial to the process that Probst describes. Louise Rosenblatt (1968) describes the reading of literature as an intensely personal experience which can help develop in the reader habits of critical thought, heightened sensitivity to others, and a more fully articulated set of values and principles.

This power of the book, of literature, of the written word, coupled with the reader, is nowhere more forcefully demonstrated than in the life of Frederick Douglass, the black abolitionist. In his *Narrative*

of the *Life of Frederick Douglass*, he wrote of the revelations brought about by a book:

I was now about twelve years old, and the thought of being a slave for life began to bear heavily upon my heart. Just about this time, I got hold of a book entitled *The Columbian Orator*. Every opportunity I got, I used to read this book....In the same book, I met with one of Sheridan's mighty speeches on and in behalf of Catholic emancipation. These were choice documents to me. I read them over and over again with unabated interest. They gave tongue to interesting thoughts of my own soul, which had frequently flashed through my mind, and died away from want of utterance....The reading of these documents enabled me to utter my thoughts, and to meet the arguments brought forward to sustain slavery. (in Chapman, 1968, pp. 240-41)

In describing his boyhood in slavery, Douglass movingly recounted his passionate desire to learn to read so that the knowledge contained in books could be his. He finally understood, he said, how to find the "pathway from slavery to freedom."

While Frederick Douglass was able to transform himself from slave to free man through books, Malcolm X transformed himself from hoodlum to revolutionary. Books allowed him to become, by turns, first Malcolm Little, then Malcolm X, and finally El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. He writes this of himself in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*:

I suppose it was inevitable that as my word-base broadened, I could for the first time pick up a book and read and now begin to understand what the book was saying. Anyone who has read a great deal can imagine the new world that opened. Let me tell you something: from then until I left that prison, in every free moment I had, if I was not reading in the library, I was reading in my bunk. You couldn't have gotten me out of books with a wedge....In fact, up to then, I never had been so truly free in my life. (X, 1965, pp. 172-73)

Could not these same kinds of transformations take place in black young adults today? After all, both men were writing about freedom of the spirit, about healing their psychic wounds even in the direst of circumstances, one on a slave plantation and the other in a prison cell. Books—the right books at the right time—spurred their growth as human beings and enabled them to be more than they had been.

Others have shown the need for literature about the African-American experience as seen from an African-American perspective. Rudine Sims (1982) discusses the value of books which reflect a black cultural perspective, books, for instance, which make use of black vernacular. Sims contends that culturally legitimate books can contribute the most toward improving the image black children have of themselves.

Houston Baker (1980) looks at the impact black literature has had on the lives of black people since the eighteenth century. He writes that autobiography, in particular, has always been important,

and that the lives of prominent and not so prominent blacks have been a beacon of sorts for other blacks to follow. For him, all the major African-American writers have had something unique and important to say to black people about the black experience.

Still others discuss the importance of choosing the right books for use by young black readers (Stanford & Amin, 1978; Williams, 1991). To be effective, the best books are those which develop empathy, enhance self-image, reflect black culture and tradition, and help in understanding the effects of racism. Most importantly, the vast majority of the books discussed by these authors are books which fall into the category of young adult literature. Books with adult characters of any color, including the classics, are not the books that black young adult readers most readily identify with. Of all groups, they are most in need of books which depict protagonists whose lives, lifestyles, and problems mirror their own.

For the poor disadvantaged black young adult, the ideal books should reflect reality but then point the way to a different and better reality. They should demonstrate that there is indeed a way out of the ghetto, out of poverty, and out of dreadful situations. They should show that life does not have to be lived the way it is being lived now. There are books that have the potential to do this, but, like medicine, the reader must have a steady dose.

The books that are discussed here can be found in many libraries. The list is not intended to be exhaustive by any means, but it does represent a beginning and, by necessity, presents a limited selection. These books are fine examples of books for young adults that can evoke the kinds of feelings about the history of the African-American struggle, about the nature of black protest, and about overcoming personal adversity that can cause positive change in the reader. Young black readers can see themselves in these pages. They can feel and see what the characters see and feel, engage in a unique dialogue, know that they are being spoken to in a special way, and embark on a great journey of self-discovery. These books tell the reader that there is value in knowing African-American history and that strength can be gained from sharing in African-American cultural traditions. They tell the reader that it is important to take responsibility for oneself and to be responsible to one's community. All are presented with the viewpoint that life may not be a "crystal stair," but it is certainly worth climbing (in Davis & Redding, 1971, pp. 306-07).

Slavery was once a fact of life in America. The labor and toil of the African slave created this nation's wealth. But it was also slavery that nearly destroyed this country, leaving a legacy of poverty and ignorance that is still in evidence today. Knowledge of that period for the black young adult is self-knowledge. It is not enough to know

the names of battles and generals. It is more important to know that human beings with human feelings lived behind the slave's mask.

Virginia Hamilton's (1988) *Anthony Burns: The Defeat and Triumph of a Fugitive Slave* pulls off the mask of one slave, revealing a human being with fears, desires, and faults. More important, the reader is given a sense of how it felt to be a slave, to be a young child in slavery, and then a young man. Anthony's exhilaration at being free of slavery is shared but so is his despair at being recaptured. Through flashbacks, the reader experiences with Anthony how it must have felt to lack the protection of both parents, to not know whether your father is the white plantation owner or another slave, and to be slapped or beaten for the slightest offense. The reader comes to know, as Anthony came to know, that slave life was precarious, unpredictable, and frightening.

In his captivity, Anthony feels great pain and a deepening despair about ever regaining his freedom:

He was aware of all that went on around him, but it was hard now for him to keep his mind on any one thing for long. His head felt light. He wanted so much just to lie down. The wrist irons and the chain that connected them grew heavier by the minute. Anthony couldn't find the strength or will to lift a finger even to scratch his nose, which itched him. The itching became a dull aching. It in turn spread into a throbbing loneliness throughout his body. He felt miserably hot in his shoulders and deathly cold in his legs. (Hamilton, 1988, p. 35)

Anthony's thoughts in a whirl, he can only repeat, "Here I be!... Caught, I am, and no longer a man. Father, protect me!" (p. 33). He wants only for the long nightmare to be over: "He gripped the bars, pressing his head up against the iron stripes. Get it over, he thought. Lord? Lord God. I can't take much more" (p. 71). This is how slavery looked and felt, and it is this kind of portrayal that has the potential to change and move readers. They will learn about loneliness and despair but also about loyalty and dedication to a cause.

When Anthony thought himself to be most alone, help emerged. Lawyers, both black and white, volunteered their services to the captured slave. Ministers took to their pulpits and to the streets on his behalf. Mass meetings were organized and held, meetings which protested both Anthony's seizure and the legality of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Young black readers will learn much here, not only about slavery but about themselves. They will come to know more about slavery and the struggle against it than they possibly could from any textbook.

The story of Anthony Burns is based on biographical fact and is beneficial because it is only through the telling of hard truths that doors to a deeper knowledge are opened. Hamilton's *The Magical*

Adventures of Pretty Pearl is no less truthful in its depiction of slavery, but it is told through the use of traditional black folklore and myth. For some, reading the black dialect used in Hamilton's book may prove difficult, but it is well worth the effort.

Hamilton introduces the reader to John de Conquer and John Henry, two of the major heroes in black folklore. Here, however, they are linked and made to be brother gods who come to earth to alleviate the suffering of the slaves. Through them and their sister, Pretty Pearl, the slaves are given medicines of many kinds to soothe their physical pains and laughter and song to soothe their emotional pain. Lesser gods are made to take physical form and assist slaves in running away.

As a young and innocent god, Pretty Pearl sees the plight of the newly enslaved African and is moved to pity:

Not long, and the two of them came upon a sorrowing crowd moaning through the tall grass. Staying hidden, they witnessed some other ones who forced the crowd along with prodding poles. The crowd wept pitifully. All were shackled—neck, wrists and ankles—with chains. Dirty and tired, they jibbered and jabbered in twelve tongues. (Hamilton, 1983, p. 13)

Hamilton sweeps the reader along from the world of the slave ship, to the world of plantation life, and finally to life after the Civil War. Here the reader sees that the leap from slavery to freedom was not a very long one. Both slavery and this new free life look much the same. Young adult readers are shown what hunger and poverty can do to a people and how oppression can wear them down and wear them out.

Most striking is Hamilton's look at a neglected area of African-American history: the groups of ex-slaves who formed communities in isolated places to avoid contact with whites. These communities often allied themselves with American Indian tribes for mutual aid and protection. History lives, and it is not only palpable in Hamilton's hands but also fun. Now young black readers may begin to see why magic, spirits, and the "mojo woman" still weave their spells in black life. Hamilton's book might also help them understand why some of their older relations still insist upon using traditional folk remedies for some ailment or another instead of two aspirins.

By way of biography, Mary Lyons takes the reader on a journey into the life and times of a prominent writer in *Sorrow's Kitchen: The Life and Folklore of Zora Neale Hurston*. Who cannot help but be inspired by the life this woman lived and by the struggles she waged against adversity. Farmed out to relatives by her stepmother after the death of her mother, her early years were desperate:

While she yearned for "family love and a resting place," Zora lived in a series of homes where she got hand-me-downs and hit-or-miss meals

instead. She was expected to provide some money for her support, so despite her longing for books and school, she dropped out to work as a maid. Feeling "restless and unstable," Zora held many such jobs, but never for long. She found work boring, and it depressed her to see others who were able to go to school. (Lyons, 1990, p. 21)

Yet, despite these uncertain beginnings, Hurston did finish high school, began college, and even studied anthropology at Columbia University, all under conditions of grinding poverty. She is quoted as saying, "I love courage...I worship strength" (p. x), two traits she must have had in abundance. During the course of her life, she wrote seven books and more than 100 articles, essays, and short stories but against a backdrop of sometimes harsh criticism from her peers and public neglect. What was it that kept her going? Perhaps she answered that question herself when she wrote, "I took a firm grip on the only weapon I had—hope—and set my feet" (p. 24).

Hurston's desire to succeed did go deeper than simply hoping. Her formative years were spent in the all black town of Eatonville, in Florida, an environment that nurtured her sense of herself as a black woman. Her mother had encouraged her curiosity and imagination, urging her to "jump at de sun." Her source of strength seemed to come from her own innate tenacity, from her determined mother and belligerent father, and from Eatonville itself. Most young African-Americans do not have this unique combination of elements in their lives, but from this book they can certainly experience what it really means to struggle and to overcome with only the aid of hope, talent, and determination. They can remember and perhaps take heart from Hurston's bold challenge to herself and her fate as a black woman in a white world: "I shall wrassle me up a future or die trying" (Lyons, 1990, p. 120).

Hamilton's *W. E. B. DuBois: A Biography* introduces the black young adult reader to W. E. B. DuBois, whose ninety-five years of life began in Reconstruction and ended on the eve of the great March on Washington in 1963. Talented and gifted, he fought a long hard battle for fair treatment of American blacks, championed the destruction of colonialism in Africa, and called for closer ties between Africans and African-Americans. A Ph.D. sociologist from Harvard, he wrote several groundbreaking books about the black experience and was a founder of the NAACP. Persecuted and hounded by the federal government in his later years, he paid a heavy price for his activism.

Aristocratic, almost white in appearance, and aloof in manner, he might be perceived by today's black youth as unimportant to issues now facing black America. However, his words, written in 1914, refute this:

for the great mass of 10,000,000 Americans of Negro descent these things are true: We are denied education....We can seldom get decent

employment....We are forced down to the lowest wage scale. We pay the highest rent for the poorest houses. We cannot buy property in decent neighborhoods....We cannot get justice in the courts. (Hamilton, 1972, pp. 106-07)

For far too many black Americans the conditions DuBois listed seventy-eight years ago are a fact of life. Few can argue with his 1915 assessment that "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line." And is this statement he made in 1914 any less true today for many living in America's black urban ghettos? "As a race we are still kept in ignorance far below the average standard of this nation and of the present age, and the ideals set before our children in most cases are far below their possibilities and reasonable promise" (Hamilton, 1972, p. 113).

Young readers of Hamilton's book will not only get to know W. E. B. DuBois and his contributions but will be provided with an intimate glimpse of his times. They will actually receive a series of mini-lessons on Reconstruction, race relations, World Wars I and II, black political agitation, and strategies of the NAACP. They will learn about lynchings, about persecution, about injustice, and about blacks and communism. It is just possible that the young African-Americans who read this book will see the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s in a new light. They might be inspired by the notion that there are no easy roads to justice and freedom, and that every road taken represents sacrifice on someone's part.

Autobiography, too, can provide the elements needed for growth and understanding. Maya Angelou's *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings* is one such book. If for no other reason, the young adult African-American should read this book for its depiction of black rural Southern life. Everything is here, the black church with its look and feel, the black child's anguish at being black, cotton picking season, and black community life.

Angelou writes about the pain of growing up black in the South but also about its joys. Life in the South of the 1930s was difficult and often dangerous, and these things stamped Angelou for life and made her what she became. She writes about the threat of white violence in this way:

His twang jogged in the brittle air. From the side of the Store, Bailey and I heard him say to Momma, "Annie, tell Willie he better lay low tonight. A crazy nigger messed with a white lady today. Some of the boys'll be coming over here later." Even after the slow drag of years, I remember the sense of fear which filled my mouth with hot, dry air, and made my body light. (Angelou, 1970, p. 14)

At another point, she describes the black cotton pickers who came daily to her grandmother's store for supplies:

Brought back to the Store, the pickers would step out of the backs of trucks and fold down, dirt-disappointed, to the ground. No matter how much they had picked, it wasn't enough. Their wages wouldn't even get them out of debt to my grandmother, not to mention the staggering bill that waited on them at the white commissary downtown....In later years I was to confront the stereotyped picture of gay song-singing cotton pickers with such inordinate rage that I was told even by fellow Blacks that my paranoia was embarrassing. But I had seen the fingers cut by the mean little cotton bolls, and I had witnessed the backs and shoulders and arms and legs resisting any further demands. (p. 7)

The scenes of rural life, where shanties, outhouses, coal-oil lamps, and freezing well water are all a part of the daily routine, tell the reader that this is how their grandparents might have lived. This is a book that can tell the reader how it used to be and how it still is in certain parts of this country.

In Mildred Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, the reader can learn even more about rural Southern life, this time in rural Mississippi in the 1930s. With its tale of white hatred of blacks and black oppression, the young black reader may come to understand why so many blacks fled the South for the North during the so-called "Great Migration." Yet, this is not a gloomy book. It is about a strong black family determined to keep its hard won land despite threats from all sides. It depicts a quietly strong father who is able to protect his family, a mother who sees the value of education for her children, and a loving grandmother. And it describes a black community which supports its own in times of crisis.

From this book, young black readers should come away with a sense of the forces that helped shape their grandparents, their parents, and continue even now to shape them. They will learn about sharecropping, about night riders, about inferior schools, about poverty, and about racism in its most destructive and insidious form.

Down in the Piney Woods, by Ethel Footman Smothers, is a work which can also contribute to the young black reader's knowledge of life in the rural South, this time in Georgia. The dialect spoken by Annie Rye and her family may even be familiar to readers, for it still can be heard in a variety of forms in the South as well as in the urban North. And the renditions of children's rhymes sprinkled liberally throughout the book should also be familiar. Even the characters and their ways of speaking and their mannerisms have an old familiar ring to them.

This book is about life in the country, with its pig and chicken feeding chores and crop planting and harvesting. Life goes along at a slow simple pace following the seasons and tradition. But more than this, *Piney Woods* is about becoming a family and of knowing

the value of family. When her stepsisters come to live with the Footman family, Annie Rye cannot bring herself to accept the three new additions to the family. It takes some time for her to realize the truth of her grandmother's words:

Sometimes it takes some of us a little longer to come up to where we oughta be. And maybe some of us never will. The good Lord ain't made none of us perfect. We all got our shortcomings. That's why we gotta take a little and give a little. And bear along wit each other. Make allowances....That's what being a family is all about. (Smothers, 1992, p. 27)

Racism does rear its ugly head in the form of a white neighbor, but this only serves to forge deeper family ties. For those readers who are not from the South and whose families are not from the South, this book allows them to share in some black Southern cultural traditions. Black Southern foods are fried, baked, and boiled; uniquely black insults are exchanged; nicknames are everywhere; and children know what happens to them when they "git into devilment." One feels as if one is sitting on the front porch on a warm summer evening listening to someone tell old family stories. For readers who have never experienced this, here is a great opportunity.

A number of young adult books with black protagonists take place in cities and in urban ghettos. They deal with a variety of issues—e.g., drugs, abandonment, gangs, violence. They can be used by readers facing these and similar problems to better understand themselves and their situations. Alice Childress's *A Hero ain't nothin' but a Sandwich* is a good example. Benjie is a thirteen-year-old drug addict, only he doesn't know it. He says he can stop taking drugs anytime he wants to; he just doesn't want to:

When I'm wrong, I just be it. I ain't scared of a livin ass, not even if they kill me. Why folks got to lie and say I'm on skag, say I'm a junkie? My grandmother say, "You a dope fiend." I don't call her coffee fiend or church fiend. No, I don't do that. They lyin! If you "on" somethin, that mean you hooked and can't give it up. I ain't hooked. (Childress, 1973, p. 10)

Benjie knows that life is difficult, that the ghetto is horrible, that "my block ain't no place to be a chile in peace" (p. 9). But Benjie has a choice in the matter. He can choose to get off of drugs and change his life because he has the support of his family, or he can choose to destroy himself. Unfortunately, this is the choice facing far too many real-life Benjies. But it is not beyond the realm of possibility that some very real Benjies might read this book and get a message that does change their lives.

Scorpions, by Walter Dean Myers, looks at gangs and gang violence. In black urban ghettos all over this country, black boys more and more have to contend with gang violence in one way or

another—as members of gangs, as victims, or as observers. Gangs can be attractive, and they can offer protection. Jamal does not want to join the Scorpions, but he finds it hard not to join. He does not want the gun he owns, but it makes him look and feel tough and protects him from bullies.

Scorpions describes real problems, and the reader of these pages will immediately see this. The reader will also recognize Jamal's lack of direction as well as the absolute powerlessness of the schools to help students who are most in need of help. Myers offers no solutions, but he does show that innocence, conscience, and responsibility still are important, even in the ghetto.

Rainbow Jordan, *It Ain't All For Nothin'*, and *The Friends* all deal with issues of loss of a parent through irresponsibility, abandonment, or death. Life is hard in the ghetto, and children have to grow up fast. They often have to grow up without fathers, mothers, or teachers who understand them. They have to contend with intransigent bureaucracies that do not or will not protect them and with schools and teachers that have given up on them. These are tremendous odds, but each of these books, in its own way, can help black kids. Friendship and loyalty are important, they say, so, too, is honesty, and "somebody in your corner" is also important.

There exists a treasure trove of young adult literature for young black readers. It consists of books which speak to black youth in a special way, mirroring their lives and feelings and reflecting their history and culture. These books have much to say to these young people, be it realistic fiction, biography, or folklore. The realistic novels confront readers with real life situations that force them to evaluate the actions and decisions of the protagonist. Historical fiction provides readers with information about their pasts, allowing them to better understand their present. Biographies demonstrate that there are others who have trod the same or similar path as the reader and that the reader need not feel alone.

The interaction of young black readers with texts about themselves is a powerful exchange, one that is limited only by access and opportunity. Libraries must take special pains to see that their collections of these materials do not just sit on the shelves. Libraries must get these books off the shelves and into the hands of readers.

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Break Your Silence: A Call to Asian Indian Children's Writers

MEENA G. KHORANA

ABSTRACT

THIS ARTICLE EXAMINES THE children's literature written in English by Asian Indian writers or their spouses who live, or have lived, in America.¹ Only those books that are published in America are considered relevant. As new immigrants, Asian Indian children's writers reflect the need to preserve their historical, social, and religious traditions for the younger generation. Hence, there is an abundance of traditional literature, fictional works, and informational books that reaffirm their intellectual and cultural roots in India. A comparative analysis of Chinese American and Japanese American children's literature reveals that Indian literature is at an earlier developmental phase, and it is only in recent decades that Chinese and Japanese children's authors have begun to focus on their historical and social experiences in America. As Indians become more settled in this country and as their numbers increase, it is hoped that their children's literature will also evolve an Asian American consciousness that will reflect their experiences in American society.

INTRODUCTION

Asian Americans are the fastest growing ethnic minority in the United States today because of the liberalized immigration policy of 1965. With half of all immigrants coming from Asia, the Asian population increased 143 percent between 1970 and 1980, and by 1985 there were 5 million Asians in America or 2.1 percent of the total population (Takaki, 1989, p. 5). Asians first came to the United States

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around the 1840s as a result of the discovery of gold in California. With the abolition of the slave trade and the onset of the industrial revolution, thousands of Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and Korean men were recruited by labor agents to work on plantations, farms, railroads, and mines of Hawaii and California—work which white Americans would not do. Yet when Asian American history is discussed, one group—the Asian Indians—has remained almost invisible with the exception of an Indian gentleman farmer, Dilip Singh Saund, the first Asian to be elected to Congress in 1956 and 1958 (Chan, 1991, p. 173). Recent research indicates that farm workers from Punjab, India, migrated to the West Coast to seek their fortunes and to escape the tyranny, repression, and unfair taxation of British colonial rule. Furthermore, a severe drought in Punjab, which lasted from 1898 to 1902, may have been the final push that sent Sikh farmers to California (Bagai, 1972, p. 28). By 1900, there were approximately 696 Asian Indians in the United States although most came between 1904 and 1924 (Bagai, 1972, p. 46).

Asian Indians, who worked mainly on the farms of California, in the lumber mills of Washington, and on the Western Pacific railroad, were subjected to the same racial oppression and discrimination as their Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino counterparts. Because they were mainly Sikhs (there were one-third Muslim and some Hindu workers as well) and their religion dictated that they wear turbans, the Indians were referred to as “rag-heads” and were not allowed to enter stores or rent rooms (Bagai, 1972, p. 28). Despite these adversities, the experienced Sikh farmers were very successful financially, and many became farm managers and labor contractors. By 1924, racist reactions to Asian labor resulted in exclusion laws which barred further immigration from Asia and prevented all Asian workers who were already in America from bringing their wives and children into the country,² marrying white Americans, owning property, and becoming citizens. The citizenship of Indians was revoked as they were now considered ineligible even though earlier American law had permitted them to become naturalized citizens because of their Aryan, or Caucasian, racial ancestry. Because of restrictive immigration and because many Indians remained bachelors,³ the Indian population in America not only remained small, but, by 1946, it was reduced to 1,500 (Takaki, 1989, p. 445).

The Luce-Cellar Bill of 1946 changed these unfair practices, and Asian Indians, along with other Asian groups, were allowed to become citizens and marry Americans, own property, and bring their relatives to America on a quota basis; however, 50 percent of the quota was reserved for aliens with occupational skills and professional degrees

(Asian Women United of California, 1989, p. 13). The Immigration Act of 1965, which allowed quotas of 20,000 immigrants annually from each Asian country and also entry of family members on a nonquota basis, led to a second wave of immigration from Asia (Chan, 1991, p. 146). According to the 1990 census figures, there are 1 million Asian Indians in America today (Abraham, 1990, p. 5). Unlike the first wave of Asian Indians, the demographics of Indian immigration have undergone a change—i.e., the newcomers are English-speaking highly educated men and women who have made significant contributions to American society as doctors, scientists, engineers, computer technologists, educators, writers, and artists.

Just as Asian Indians have been ignored in accounts of Asian American history, likewise, they have been forgotten in literature, especially children's literature. Bibliographies of Asian American children's literature, prepared by libraries and scholars alike, overlook the contributions made by Asian Indians in America. While it is true that there is not much literary output by this group in America because the number of Indians writing in English is small, an examination of their children's literature is vital not only for enhancing knowledge of India but also for providing an understanding of the early phases of a literature developed by a specific immigrant group. Because of their smaller numbers, and because they are relative newcomers in America, Asian Indian writers reflect the duality and needs of first generation immigrants. They express a strong relationship with the home country and seek to preserve and propagate their culture for the next generation of Indians and for non-Indian readers. While integration with mainstream America is valued at social and professional levels, exclusivity is perpetuated at the inner emotional level.

FICTION

In the area of fiction, there is not a single children's book that describes the experiences of Asian Indians in America. Since the majority of immigrants from India started to arrive only after 1965, twenty-seven years is not sufficient time to form a meaningful relationship with the soil. Moreover, first generation immigrants are generally too preoccupied with establishing themselves professionally, economically, and socially to write and reflect on their experiences in the new land. With the exception of one or two adult writers and filmmakers in recent years, Asian Indians have even remained silent on the experiences of the early settlers on the West Coast. The children of these pioneers, now third and fourth generation Americans, have not revealed the pain and loneliness, the triumph and humiliation, and the courage and contributions of their Indian

ancestors. Unlike the Chinese and Japanese in America, the Indian community does not have a Laurence Yep, a Paul Lee, a Sheila Hamanaka, or a Yoshiko Uchida to give voice to its historical and social experiences.

A quick review of Chinese American and Japanese American children's literature will help explain the Indian situation. It is only in the past two decades that Laurence Yep has published historical novels based on the accounts of the early Chinese workers in America and his own parents' history in *Dragonwings* (1975), *Mountain Light* (1985), *The Lost Garden* (1991), and *The Star Fisher* (1991). The Japanese also published a variety of books like *Farewell to Manzanar* (Houston & Houston, 1973), *Japanese American Journey* (Endo et al., 1985), *Journey to Topaz* (Uchida, 1971), *Samurai of Gold Hill* (Uchida, 1972), and *The Journey* (Hamanaka, 1990), all books about the concentration camps of World War II only some thirty or forty years after the Pearl Harbor incident. Likewise, it is only the second and third generation of Chinese and Japanese writers who have described their cultural conflicts and duality in fictional works like *The Child of the Owl* (Yep, 1977), *Sea Glass* (Yep, 1979), *A Jar of Dreams* (Uchida, 1981), *The Best Bad Thing* (Uchida, 1983), *The Happiest Ending* (Uchida, 1985), *Sachiko Means Happiness* (Sakai, 1990), and *The Invisible Thread: An Autobiography* (Uchida, 1991).

Despite the comparative abundance of books by Chinese and Japanese writers in America, Jenkins and Austin (1987) point out, in their analysis of children's literature about Asians and Asian Americans, that the diversity of the Asian American experience has scarcely been touched—the Japanese focus mainly on the concentration camps of World War II, the Chinese on the traditional lifestyle in Chinatowns, and the Korean experience is virtually untapped (pp. 86, 155). If this is true with Japanese, Chinese, and Koreans with their longer tradition, larger numbers, and deeper historical roots in the United States, then it is not surprising that Indian authors, who are relative newcomers, still reaffirm their roots in India by writing fictional works for children based on Hindu cultural values, themes of progress in Indian villages, and the pleasures of childhood in India.

Dhan Gopal Mukerji, who was among the first Asian Americans to write for children, came to the United States in 1910 to study at Berkeley, and he committed suicide in 1936 at the age of 46. His children's books do not express his inner agony, his intellectual disillusionment with Socialism and Anarchism, and the hunger of his dissatisfied spirit for a sense of freedom and some unattainable good—topics he treats in his adult autobiography, *Caste and Outcast* (1923a).⁴ Instead, through his children's novels, Mukerji directs his

search for self back to his Hindu upbringing and training as a brahmin priest and shows that reform in the world can only come through purifying one's soul. He sensitively portrays the inner lives of animals and humans, their spiritual affinity with creation, and humankind's abuse of this trust.

In his animal fantasies, like *The Chief of the Herd* (1929a) and *Kari the Elephant* (1922), the jungle is portrayed as an idyllic place where animal behavior is regulated by the law of the jungle and the social organization, habits, and interrelationships of animals. Through the exciting adventures of Sirdar, a thirty-year-old tusker who is chief of the herd, and Kari, who is being trained by a young village boy, Mukerji lovingly describes the elephants' habits, mating rituals, and care of the young. Elephants are portrayed as elevated beings because of their spirituality, sense of justice, intelligence, and ability to live in harmony with other creatures without exploiting them. Another recurrent theme in these novels is that food and body odor determine personality. Mukerji believes that each animal is born to a particular food that lets off a distinct odor; hence, animals that are aggressive and live by killing are diseased and leave the stench of hate and fear, whereas a vegetarian diet is conducive to a spiritual and peace loving nature. In *Fierce-Face: The Story of a Tiger* (1936), Mukerji gives a balanced view by presenting the Indian jungle through the experiences of a young tiger cub. The flesh-eating animal is no longer an object of contempt; rather, Mukerji sympathetically portrays the young tiger as he goes through his difficult first year. The tigress nurses and protects her cub tenderly, teaches him the signs of the jungle, trains him to hunt and kill, and shows him how to survive fire, flood, and disease so that he can overcome fear and gain confidence. The tiger is also a creature of God who is only fulfilling his nature and dharma (prescribed duty).

Mukerji's novels also explore the idea of the human quest for spirituality and harmony with the forest and its creatures. In both *Hari, the Jungle Lad* (1924) and *Ghond, the Hunter* (1928), he describes the training of warrior-hunters in the Indian jungles and their vow to protect the weak, succor the sufferer, and punish the wrongdoer. The latter novel in particular describes the deeply religious lives of the villagers and the practical as well as spiritual relationships that they develop with beasts and birds. Through hunting expeditions, Hari and Ghond learn that fair play in the jungle means that they must not kill an animal without first giving warning, must not kill for food or vain sport, and must neither hate nor fear. In contrast, rich city folk and Englishmen, lacking native wisdom and generosity, fail to recognize their oneness with nature and try to overpower it. They use unfair hunting methods by shooting

tigers from the safe distance of elevated platforms and trap elephants by digging pits—with all the advantage on the side of the hunter. As a result, the vast jungle tracts and elephant herds are disappearing. Fear of the animal destroys all sense of chivalry in humans.

Jungle Beasts and Men (Mukerji, 1923b) provides the answer to the human search for truth and salvation. Based on Mukerji's pilgrimage described in *Caste and Outcast* (1923), two teenagers set off on a journey in search of the perfect guru or spiritual teacher. They observe jungle life, help a cholera-stricken village, and meet a brave warrior and a famous magician, but their quest is fulfilled only after they encounter Data, the river pirate, who belongs to a fraternity of merciful men who rob the rich for exploiting the poor. He is the holy man the pilgrims have been seeking because he has overcome fear, hate, and sorrow as the *Bhagwad Gita* dictates. Data convinces the young pilgrims not to wander all over India in search of God because their journey should be an inner one.

It is in Mukerji's best known work, *Gay Neck* (1927), winner of the 1928 Newbery Medal, that his theory of spirituality is developed in depth. It is the story of a pigeon, Gay Neck, who is known for his beauty and intelligence, and his young trainer, a fourteen-year-old boy. Presented from the perspectives of both the protagonist and Gay Neck, the fantasy takes readers through the experiences of the characters and how they formulate a personal philosophy based on Buddhist and Hindu teachings.

The protagonist takes Gay Neck and his companion, Hira, to Europe to serve as carrier pigeons for the Indian contingent of the British Army during World War I. Their mission is to go behind German lines to reconnoiter and locate an ammunition site so that a bombing can be staged. Although Gay Neck survives (Hira is killed while carrying out the mission), his near-death encounters with violence and destruction leave him full of fear, and he is unable to fly. Upon returning to India, Gay Neck is taken to a lamasery in the Himalayas to be healed of his decaying emotions through prayers, meditation, and positive thoughts. *Gay Neck* (1927) and other novels by Mukerji clearly illustrate that fear and hatred lead to irrational behavior and arouse the same emotions in others. The Buddhist lama is full of sadness that if the war continues it will spread hate and fear in the world: "Mankind is going to be so loaded with fear, hate, suspicion and malice that it will take a whole generation before a new set of people can be reared completely free from them" (p. 173).

Although Mukerji never directly attacked the British Raj or joined the revolutionary Ghadr Party organized by Indian intellectuals in California, his jungle fantasies can be interpreted as metaphors for British colonial rule and the conflict between

materialism (West) and spiritualism (East). Just as the rifle empowers the *shikari* (hunter) to destroy wildlife and ruin the jungle ecology, so the British use their political and military might to exploit the peoples and natural resources of their colonies out of greed and fear.

Observation of jungle life also prompts Mukerji to reject dogma and to acknowledge that humankind, nature, and animals are but facets of the divine. All living things can inform the finite with the infinite and "connect" with that eternal part of themselves—*brahman*—which is in all forms of life. In *Kari the Elephant* (1922), he writes that "each plant and each animal, like man, has a golden thread of spirituality in his soul. In the darkness of the animal's eyes and the eloquence of man's mind it was the same Spirit, the great active Silence moving from life to life" (p. 124). Mukerji's themes, carefully chosen details, and poetic prose reveal his preoccupation with the true meaning of being civilized. In *Hari, the Jungle Lad* (1924) and *The Chief of the Herd* (1924), he describes incidents of flood and fire in a village where both humans and animals unite against their common enemy and later revert to the old relationships once the danger is over. Mukerji expresses his earnest desire that humans show their moral superiority to animals by learning of brotherhood not only in times of danger but in times of prosperity as well. He believes that it is only through spirituality, meditation, self-purification, and just behavior that animals and humans can lay claim to superiority.

The tradition established by Mukerji reflects the Western interest in the Indian jungle, Hindu philosophy, and ancient Sanskrit scriptures. India was revered as the land of spirituality, and both Indian and Western writers turned to Eastern mysticism as a means of achieving inner peace and salvation. Sometimes bordering on the exotic, Western children's authors like Rene Guillot, Iris Macfarlane, Arthur Catherall, Chester Bryant, and Alan C. Jenkins portray the jungle as the microcosm of the universe where varied species and plants live in harmony. In America, *Gift of the Forest* (1942) embodies the Hindu concept of *ahimsa* or nonviolence through the friendship between a village boy, Bim, and his tiger cub, Heera, whom he finds abandoned in the jungle. Like Mukerji, Singh and Lownsbey acknowledge the rights of animals to a dignified and free existence on earth. As Bim and Heera grow, eat, sleep, and play together, the very practical question of what to do with a grown tiger has to be faced. Bim sees only two options open to his majestic tiger—a life of captivity or exploitation by the Maharajah who arranges sham fights between Bim and Heera. Although heartbroken, love for his pet prompts Bim to return Heera to the jungle so that he can explore the world and find his true nature.

Once India becomes independent, the tone of Asian Indian fiction shifts to themes of national development and village prosperity. Written primarily during the 1960s and 1970s, these novels of progress reflect the aspirations of newly independent India and the Nehru government to attain the material benefits of Western society through modern technology, Western medicine, and education for the masses. India's high illiteracy rate, which has remained constant at 63 percent, explains the urgency for educational opportunities in villages. Rama Mehta's *Ramu, A Story of India* (1966) and *The Life of Keshav* (1969) have the definite agenda that prosperity and progress can only be achieved through education for boys. The hopes of the families in both stories are centered on the education of their sons. The conflict in *Ramu, A Story of India* focuses on the protagonist's lack of concern for his father's hard work and his mother's thrift in saving money for his education. Ramu is unaware of the importance of education and the unique opportunity his parents are giving him. Parental anger when he misses school for an entire day to be at the fair makes him realize the extent of his error.

Mehta's *The Life of Keshav*, in contrast, presents a tender picture of family life in a village in northern India. When young Keshav is helped by the village schoolmaster to obtain a scholarship to study in the city, he suddenly becomes a misfit—in front of the slick city boys he is a village bumpkin while in the village his book learning alienates him from his former friends. As drought and illness bring misfortune, Keshav is willing to forego his education as school imposes a rather long period of dependence on parents, but each family member feels a sense of collective responsibility and is willing to sacrifice a personal dream, possession, or pride for the education of Keshav. Likewise, Thampi's *Geeta and the Village School* (1960) handles the familiar theme of girls' education in a unique and sensitive manner. It is not the traditional villagers who are opposed to progress, but Geeta herself who is too shy and timid to leave the security of home. One day, while running away from the sound of an airplane, she accidentally bumps into the schoolteacher who takes her fears seriously and tells her that the more she tries to learn and understand things, the less afraid she will be. Geeta's interest in the outside world is sparked and she makes the decision to attend school.

Shirley Arora writes of the lack of educational facilities for villagers in *What Then, Raman?* (1960) and the introduction of scientific methods of fishing in a coastal village in South India in *The Left-Handed Chank* (Arora, 1966). In the latter novel, due to a lack of understanding of the "unknown" and the superstitious beliefs of the fishermen, the scientific efforts and suggestions of the Inspector of Fisheries are suspect. However, through the experiences

of the twelve-year-old hero, Kumaran, the villagers' vast practical experience is acknowledged and they, in turn, come to trust technology and form a cooperative society for scientific fishing. In both novels, the villagers' main concern is survival and the lack of education and technology a major hindrance to progress.

An entirely different solution to the periodic drought and famine that villagers have to endure is presented in *Chikka* (Nirodi, 1962), whose leading character attempts to better his life by leaving the village. Twelve-year-old Chikka goes to the city to work as a servant with a warm and loving family. He works hard in the kitchen, saves his salary, and learns to read and write in his spare time. While this story may sound like a stereotypical novel of progress, the author successfully depicts Chikka's feelings, dreams, and temptations.

Another type of fiction provides nostalgia for India through picture books about the simple joys of childhood in India. Author-illustrator Mehlii Gobhai's *Ramu and the Kite* (1968) is a particularly delightful account of a young boy's excitement during his first kite season. In *Lakshmi, The Water Buffalo Who Wouldn't* (1969a), Gobhai portrays the joyful side of village life through the mischievous pranks of Gokul and his water buffalo, Lakshmi. A humorous predicament arises when Lakshmi refuses to give milk because Gokul's mother, the one who usually milks her, is sick. When no amount of cajoling works, Gokul's father tricks Lakshmi by dressing up in his wife's clothes and jingling bracelets.

A more detailed account of childhood in India is given by Sharat Shetty in *A Hindu Boyhood* (1970). Shetty lovingly describes his 150-year-old family home in Marakadda, a village in South India, where three generations live in harmony under one roof. Using his traditional Hindu family as a point of entry, Shetty explains the daily rituals of bathing and eating, worship and religious festivals, joint family system, and caste system. He broadens the scope of the narrative by describing his family's participation in the larger village community. As a counterpoint to his strictly traditional upbringing, Shetty focuses on the summer of 1946, just before Indian Independence, when he and his best friend plan to test the tabu which prevents high caste Hindus from associating with untouchables. The two boys touch an outcast boy and then await the horrible curse but nothing happens. This experience teaches Shetty, on a personal level, what Mahatama Gandhi was trying to achieve nationally and politically in his campaign against social discrimination.

The previously discussed fictional works, with the exception of *Chikka* (Nirodi, 1962) and *Ramu, A Story of India* (Mehta, 1966), focus on life in the village. Whether the story is about the pleasures of childhood, the need for reform, or the validity of spiritual values,

it is the village setting to which the city-bred and city-educated authors turn. On the one hand, the village represents the elemental forces of nature, the innocence and purity of childhood, and the freedom from the corruption and materialism of the city, while, on the other hand, it is perceived as a symbol of India's backwardness and a deterrent to material and social progress.

A slight shift from these stereotypical novels can already be detected in the 1980s with Namjoshi's fantasy, *Aditi and the One-Eyed Monkey* (1986), which is a metaphor for the feminist qualities of love, peace, and sensitivity overcoming the negative attributes of aridity, selfishness, and destruction. Princess Aditi is treated like a possession when she is bartered in exchange for the dragon's promise not to bring drought to her kingdom, but she displays her intelligence and compassion by subduing the dragon and rendering him harmless.

TRADITIONAL LITERATURE

Traditional literature, like the fiction by Asian Indians, also aims to direct young readers to their cultural and spiritual roots in India. Just as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese children's literature in the United States focuses on the retelling of folktales to display pride in their ethnic origins and culture, likewise, Asian Indians are also primarily concerned with preserving their culture, values, and way of life for the first generation of Indians born in America. Far from severing all emotional and cultural ties, physical departure from India has resulted in strengthening ethnic bonds that serve as strong cohesive forces in defining identity.

In the early part of this century, Mukerji published several collections of India's traditional literature like *Bunny, Hound and Clown* (1931), *The Master Monkey* (1932), *Hindu Fables for Little Children* (1929b), and *Rama: The Hero of India* (1930). It is significant to remember that Mukerji's works were directed at a Western audience; he wanted to introduce American children to the ancient lores of India and the wisdom that Indian parents quite naturally pass on to their children through storytelling. As is typical of Mukerji's style, his retellings of Indian epics, fables, trickster stories, legends, and creation myths also emphasize Hindu philosophy and moral lessons so that they can continue to mold character and eliminate materialism. Contemporary Indian authors also turn to the wisdom of Indian traditional literature as a popular source of children's stories. For instance, *Tales from India* (Upadhyay, 1971) is an entertaining retelling of ten fables from the *Panchatantra*. Each fable has a universal theme on the virtues of using common sense and being practical, yet it also evokes the atmosphere of India through careful attention to details. Gobhai's *Usha, the Mouse Maiden* (1969b) is

a variation of the familiar tale of a father trying to select a mighty husband for his mouse-maiden, while *The Legend of the Orange Princess* (1971) is a romantic story of transformation, selfless love, and separation. Through his eloquent prose and brilliant illustrations, Gobhai provides details of Indian scenery as well as portraying characters and their emotions with sensitivity and tenderness.

Madhur Jaffrey's collection of folktales in *Seasons of Splendour* (1985) is a unique blend of autobiography, storytelling, and descriptions of festivals and rituals. The book is structured around the various phases of the lunar calendar and the seasonal and religious festivals and stories associated with them. Each section of the book narrates incidents and anecdotes from Jaffrey's childhood and provides the living connection between folklore and life in modern India. In narrating the activities of her extended family, Jaffrey demonstrates how daily life is enriched by traditional values. Her account is especially relevant to Indian children being raised in America because Jaffrey's modern family has successfully blended Indian and Western cultures. There is no discordant note in the children being sent to Catholic and Anglican schools in India and their barrister grandfather sipping whiskey sodas and playing bridge, while the women of the household keep alive their heritage by tending the deities in the prayer room, performing rituals, and reciting stories from Hindu mythology. For instance, during Dussehra, a festival celebrating the victory of good over evil which falls on the tenth day of the waxing moon around late September, Rama, seventh incarnation of God Vishnu and hero of the epic *Ramayana*, defeats Ravana, the demon king of Sri Lanka. The epic is recited every year in Jaffrey's household with unique details added as a result of frequent retelling. To symbolically recreate the defeat of Ravana and their rejection of evil, Jaffrey and her cousins make clay statues of Ravana, place them on the driveway, and then ride over them with their bicycles. On this day, weapons are also worshipped by the warrior caste, but since Jaffrey comes from an educated family of writers, her family places an assortment of pens, pencils, nibs, and ink in the prayer room to be blessed.

Jaffrey's childhood experiences illustrate how time-honored traditions can adapt to changing conditions. She writes: "We hardly understood the differences between East and West. We just assumed that someone's grand plan included all of us in it, with all our differing cultures" (Jaffrey, 1985, p. 8). Hence, the children just as naturally learn Shakespeare, Dickens, and Western nursery rhymes as they assimilate the Hindu rules of conduct for well-behaved men and women, loyalty and love between brothers and sisters, and qualities

that ensure domestic bliss and prosperity. As the seasons come full circle and the book draws to a close, Jaffrey concludes: "The cycle of stories will start again, some new ones to remind us that we do not know everything, and some old ones to teach us that our values are constant. The world will be different next year. But it will also be the same" (p. 124).

Asian Indians take pride in their ancient culture a step further than do Chinese and Japanese writers in America. India's oral tradition is also expressed through the devotional tale, which emphasizes spiritual knowledge, successful moral living, and commitment to one's religion. Although prescriptive in nature, the devotional tale directly addresses the needs of Indian children growing up in America. In his foreword to *Yaksha Prashna* (Srinivasan, 1984), Swami Satchidananda states that Indians should not forsake their noble heritage because material success does not assure inner happiness, and: "If we really care about our children, we will take the time to educate them properly. They must learn moral and ethical values, as well as the eternal spiritual truths revealed by our saints, sages and scriptures of yore" (p. 1). The International Yoga Society of Miami promotes universal love and spiritual life through classes on Yoga, Vedanta, and *Upanishads*. Swami Jyotir Maya Nanda illustrates his philosophical discourses with moral tales that have been collected in *Yoga Stories and Parables* (1976) and *Yoga Mystic Stories and Parables* (1974). Swamiji's succinct and unadorned prose focuses on the action and emotional conflict in each story and the "victory of the human spirit over despair and defeat" (Jyotir Maya Nanda, 1974, p. iii). In Santa Cruz, California, Baba Hari Dass (1980), a yogi who has dedicated his life to the education and welfare of children, publishes books on folklore and yoga as a means to a healthy physical, mental, and spiritual life. For instance, through characters and events that young children can relate to, the stories in *Mystic Monkey* (1984) raise philosophic questions on birth and death, the transcendental quest for god, Karma, and performing one's dharma.

Similarly, the picture books published by Bala Books on the Krishna incarnation of God Vishnu, though not exclusively aimed at an Indian audience, reinforce the commitment of the younger generation to their Vedic heritage and Sanskrit scriptures. *A Gift of Love* (D-asa & D-asi, 1982), which is based on the tenth canto of the Vedic text, *Bhagavata Purana*, narrates an episode from the enduring friendship between Krishna and the poor brahmin, Sudama. The story symbolizes the devotion of the faithful and renunciation of material pleasures. *Krishna, Master of All Mystics* (Greene, 1981) and *Agha the Terrible Demon* (Wilson, 1977) narrate exploits from the childhood of Krishna when he was a cowherd in Vrindavan.

Despite the fun and mischief, Krishna is fully aware of his divinity, and he employs his mystic powers to protect the innocent and punish evildoers.

A. V. Srinivasan, who is active in the Indian community's efforts to transmit Hindu culture to the younger generation born in America, has published *Yaksha Prashna* (1984) which is a translation of a group of riddles from the Sanskrit epic, *Mahabharata*. Through these riddles, the Yaksha, a heavenly being, tests the virtue, self-discipline, and leadership skills of his son, Yudhisthira, the Pandava hero, and also tests his readiness to defeat the evil Kauravas. Although intended to inculcate values based on ancient Hindu thought and teachings, Srinivasan has selected only those questions and answers that have universal applicability. Through a thematic arrangement of the riddles pertaining to ethical, social, religious, and personal issues, Srinivasan poses the fundamental questions: What are the qualities of an admirable person? What is dharma? What is happiness and how can one achieve it? Personal character is stressed for all human beings as a guide for success and happiness. The qualities conducive to happiness are a serene and quiet mind, simplicity, kindness to all, and renunciation of desire. Some of the negative forces that prevent mental illumination and true relationships are ignorance, pride, greed, attachment to material possessions, hypocrisy, power, and fruits of action.

Srinivasan also provides a brief summary and commentary on each set of questions and answers to generate discourse, stimulate philosophic inquiry, and encourage Indian children to apply these maxims to their lives. Since the *Vedas* are complex and the truth of dharma mysteriously hidden, Srinivasan suggests that one should follow the examples of good souls like Yudhisthira and Mahatma Gandhi who have successfully upheld dharma. In short, *Yaksha Prashna* has to be read and understood in reference to one's own conduct or the examples set by others. In addition to inculcating Hindu values such as loyalty and obedience to one's parents, *Yaksha Prashna* also aims to provide children with emotional and psychological roots and confidence as they assimilate into both Indian and American cultures and fulfill their future social roles. In the introduction, Swami Saraswati Devyashram likens the test of the Yaksha to the difficulties that Hindu parents and their children in North America are encountering in their daily lives. "The battle between the Pandavas and Kauravas," writes Swamiji, "is within each of us, and we are being tested to see if we hold steadfast to Dharma" (p. 5).

The books of the publisher Veda Niketan, under the auspices of the Arya Samaj Foundation of North America, are specifically

aimed at imparting spiritual knowledge to Hindu children in order to educate them and develop their character. *Elementary Teachings of Hinduism* (Vedalankar, 1973) and *Basic Teachings of Hinduism* (Vedalankar, n. d.) are graded texts that explain the fundamental concepts of Hinduism such as the nature of Dharma, God, Prayer, principles of Hinduism, Yoga, Yagna and Sanskara, Vedic scriptures, and Law of Action (Karma). Each concept is first explained and then illustrated either with a story from the Sanskrit epics or with legends associated with Krishna, Buddha, or the saints. Furthermore, brief biographies of Hindu reformers like Swami Dayanand, Swami Shankaracharya, Swami Vivekananda, and Mahatama Gandhi embody the practical and experiential dimensions of Hindu religion. Both primers are intended to prepare youth to understand the concepts elaborated in the basic Hindu scriptures *Vedas*, *Bhagwad Gita*, and *Upanishads* at a more profound and philosophic level. The Arya Samaj, which was established in 1875 by Swami Dayanand, is engaged in spreading the true knowledge of Hindu dharma as contained in the *Vedas*, and it rejects the beliefs and practices that later became associated with Hinduism such as untouchability, caste system, child marriage, polygamy, and unequal status of women. This is part of a worldwide movement to propagate Hinduism and to effect social change.

Each of these Hindu denominations engaged in transmitting the spiritual heritage of India to the younger generation emphasizes the ecumenical spirit of Hinduism and states that its goal is not exclusivity but the combined task of all Americans to achieve universal love, peace, and unity. Steve Rosen (1985), associate editor of Bala Books, states: "Ultimately what is being fought for is more than just a literary tradition: it is a way of seeing the world" (n.p.).

Similarly, Buddhist teachings are being preserved through the publications of the Buddhist Foundation in Washington, D.C. and the Jataka Tales Series by Dharma Press in California. Each Jataka tale is a retelling of a birth story in which Buddha is reincarnated in various forms. Whether he is reborn as a woodpecker, buffalo, bird, fish, deer, or human, Buddha's actions are truly selfless and noble, and, no matter how he is treated, he continues to bring joy and happiness to others. These fables convey fundamental insights into human nature and the relationship between what people do and what happens to them (Karma). Through these simple stories, the nature of happiness for individuals and communities, the qualities of a leader, hospitality toward guests, bonds of friendship, power of truth and honest actions, and nonviolence are discussed. The Jatakas teach that one should love and respect all living things because only positive actions guarantee good results and motivate good

behavior in others. Of the numerous tales in this series, *Great Gift and the Wish-Fulfilling Gem* (Miphram, 1986) is clearly a metaphor for the heroic trials that Buddha endured to relieve the sorrow of the world. Great Gift goes on an epic journey to seek the wish-fulfilling gem that will satisfy the material needs of his people. Then, Buddha-like, he teaches them how to be happy and live together in harmony.

For Muslim children from India and other South Asian countries, there are several mosques and organizations in North America that import and publish religious books and hold classes on Islamiat, Urdu, and Arabic. Muslim children read stories and biographies that inculcate devotion to Allah, love for Prophet Muhammad, and the qualities of kindness, truthfulness, forgiveness, and piety. *The Guiding Crescent: Muslim Stories for Children* (Iqbal, 1977) narrates events from the lives of the prophets, caliphs, and heroes of Islam and emphasizes the willingness of Muslims to abide by the strict beliefs established by Prophet Muhammad. *The Birth of the Prophet* (Alsahhaar, 1976) emphasizes the divine mission of Prophet Muhammad by narrating the prophecies and legends surrounding his birth, while *Stories of Some of the Prophets* (Hashim, 1974) traces the history and development of Islam through short biographies of the various prophets of the Old Testament. These biographies clearly testify to the close relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. *Prophet Muhammad's Guidance for Children* (Abdul, 1980), in contrast, records the sayings and moral teachings of the prophet as they pertain to the everyday lives and problems of children. Islamic books, like their Hindu and Buddhist counterparts, serve the explicit purpose of providing their readers with moral guidance and religious education.

INFORMATIONAL BOOKS

While traditional and religious literature emphasizes culture and spirituality, informational books attempt to provide a balanced perspective by dispelling the misconceptions of India as a backward tradition-bound area of the world. The richness and variety of life in India are presented through a sociological investigation of topics like land and people, social and political organization, science and industry, clothing and daily habits, marriage customs, religious celebrations, and art and architecture. While a sense of respect for old values is evident, the necessity of meeting the challenges of the twentieth century is frankly discussed as in the novels of progress. Elaine Kim (1982) terms such books ambassadors of goodwill because their primary purpose is to win friends and understanding in the West by providing the Asian perspective. This approach is not unique

to Indian writers. Kim's study of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino literature in America indicates that their early literature was also characterized by "efforts to bridge the gap between East and West and plead for tolerance by making euphemistic observations about the West on the one hand while explaining Asia in idealized terms on the other" (p. 24).

Modak, in *The Land and People of India* (1960), takes readers on a personal journey through India. After providing the geographical, economic, and political significance of major Indian cities, she traces the history and achievements of the various epochs from the Indus Valley Civilization and the Aryan invasion to Mughal and British rule to the present time. This cultural history of India is made all the more readable and interesting because of Modak's narrative style and selection of images and examples with which Western children can relate. In contrast, Thapar's *Introducing India* (1966) does not overwhelm young readers with historical facts and details; instead, it provides an intimate and personal experience of living in India through poetic descriptions of mountains and rivers and narration of the history and legends associated with the various regions. She also points out the influence of geography, history, and religion on the present customs in clothing, food habits, festivals and rituals, and village planning. Sarin, in *India: An Ancient Land, A New Nation* (1985), frankly addresses the problems facing modern India as well as giving sympathetic accounts of past and present achievements. She presents the richly textured life of Indians by inviting readers to share the warmth of family ties, the magic and fun of celebrations, and the oral traditions and values that enrich daily life. Finally, Raman's *India* (1972), while it provides similar information on India, is exceptional because, far from imparting knowledge to a passive audience, it demands active intellectual involvement by forcing readers to analyze and interpret the text, photographs, and charts.

In addition to these general books, there are others that provide information on specific topics. In *Getting to Know the River Ganges* (Soni, 1964), India's past achievements and glory, its present democracy and industrialization, and its future hopes are organized around the passage of the Ganges from the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal. Soni takes readers on an imaginary *yatra* (pilgrimage) and eloquently describes the river as the center of religious, economic, and social activity for the millions of people who live on her banks. The legend associated with Mother Ganga is narrated to explain the reverence that Hindus feel for this holy river. Bani Shorter's *India's Children* (1960) and Sumena Chandavarkar's *Children of India* (1971) introduce Western readers to Indian children from diverse cultural,

ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Both books go beyond factual biographical details by narrating important events from an Indian child's perspective. Childhood is a time of enjoyment, curiosity, and fun for the privileged as well as the poor. Shorter, an American author who has lived in India, gives a complete, yet sensitive, picture of life in Indian villages through the stories of eleven boys and girls in *India's Children*. There is no attempt to hide or gloss over the problems of untouchability or poverty; rather, Shorter describes the strong role of the mother, the adolescents' preparation for fulfilling their roles as adult members of the family and village community, and the changes in traditional village life due to technology and village uplift programs. Both Shorter and Chandavarkar paint a hopeful picture of India's future and the ability of its young to shoulder the responsibilities of building a strong nation.

Bagai's *The East Indians and the Pakistanis in America* (1972) is the only children's book that discusses Asian Indians in America. It provides a thorough historical, political, economic, and social account of the migration of Indians to the West Coast in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Bagai also outlines the continual exchange of ideas between India and America and the specific contributions of Indians and Pakistanis to American society today.

CONCLUSION

This discussion of children's literature by Asian Indians clearly indicates that the Indian social identity is still perceived as foreigners. Their writings reflect a strong preference for themes that reaffirm cultural ties with India because of an overwhelming sense of exile and nostalgia and a desire to portray the Indian situation in the best possible light. While devotional or religious books continue to be popular in children's publishing, there has been a sharp decline in the publication of fictional works in the 1980s. Since Indians are now fairly well established in this country, this decline in publishing could indicate that Indian authors are reevaluating their position in America and trying to find a new literary voice. A shift in perspective can already be detected in the efforts of the Indian community to form a collective political voice to fight growing racial violence against Indians, especially the "Dot Buster" and "Lazy Boys" gangs in New Jersey, discrimination against foreign medical graduates, anti-Asian admission policies in Ivy League institutions, and the new *Immigration Bill*. Turning to the example of the Indian community in the United Kingdom, where Indians, as former British subjects, have a longer tradition, Indian authors have already become visible in the field of children's literature. In *Sumitra's Story* (1982),

Rukshana Smith poignantly portrays a young girl's confusion as she is poised between her Indian and British identities; Farrukh Dhondy, in *East End At Your Feet* (1976), describes the racist attacks against South Asians; and Manju Aggarwal (1984, 1985a, 1985b), in a series of books, describes how South Asian immigrants have successfully maintained their religious practices in Britain.

In the United States, with the filming of movies like *Mississippi Masala* (1992), which depicts an interracial friendship between an Indian girl and an Afro-American male; the publication of Bharati Mukherjee's (1988) award winning book, *The Middleman and Other Stories* about Indian immigrants in America; and the contributions of Indian women like Meena Alexander, Chitra Divakaruni, Arun Mukherjee, Rashmi Luthra, and Kartar Dhillon to anthologies of Asian American women writers, adult authors, instead of nostalgically looking back to their roots in India for self-definition, have started to make the transition from Indian to Asian American. It is hoped that children's writers will follow the trend being established by adult authors by describing the rich experiences of Asian Indians in America. The stories of the first wave of Indians in California—as workers on the railroad, in lumber mills, and in lettuce fields; as victims of racist attacks; as members of the revolutionary Ghadr Party against British imperialism; as “Mexican-Hindus,” the children of Sikh fathers and Mexican mothers; and as successful gentlemen farmers in the Imperial Valley—need to be told. Children's literature also needs to make visible the hopes and joys, the sense of dislocation and social adjustment, the internal conflicts and loneliness, and the crucial decisions in child raising that the new wave of immigrants has experienced. As the first generation of Indians born in America after 1965 comes of age, children's stories also need to voice their unique situation—the confusion arising from conforming to their parents' culture at home and American culture at school, parental restrictions against dating and marrying non-Indians, and identity conflicts arising from differences in physical appearance, customs, and value systems. These stories need to be told, these voices need to be heard if children's literature is to adequately portray the cultural mosaic of American society.

NOTES

¹ For an analysis of books about India published by Western authors, refer to the introduction of this author's annotated bibliography of the children's literature of the Indian subcontinent (Greenwood Press, 1991).

² Over 50 percent of Indian laborers in America in 1909 were already married in India (Takaki, 1989, p. 308); only seven pioneering Indian women were able to join their husbands before World War I (Bagai, 1972, p. 24).

³. Statistics indicate that between 1913 and 1946, 47 percent of the marriages of Asian Indians in America were to Mexican women in California, and their children were nicknamed "Mexican-Hindus" (Takaki, 1989, p. 310).

⁴. Mukerji's autobiography gives a candid account of the author's life as an upper-caste brahmin boy in India and his experiences at Berkeley, where he had to perform menial tasks and work as a farm hand in order to survive. By 1912, he had rejected Western materialism and industrialization as a solution to the problems of India and had turned to Hindu culture as an inspiration for his children's stories.

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Native American Literature for Children and Young Adults

ARLENE B. HIRSCHFELDER

ABSTRACT

THE AUTHOR ADDRESSES the importance and features of Native American oral literature (myths, legends, and folktales—or stories) in Native American life, accounts for the heightened interest of publishers in producing dozens of volumes with Native American stories for children, and considers problems in these works as well as in those books that carefully retell the stories. She then discusses past and current problems in children's nonfiction and fiction books about Native Americans and gives some examples of nonfiction works and novels that provide accurate information.

INTRODUCTION

During the 1940s through the 1960s, children's book publishers put out a sprinkling of books with Native American "myths," "legends," and "folktales" (many Native Americans prefer "traditions," or "stories," or "sacred narratives" to these terms). The 1970s saw a steady stream of books of Native American oral literature. According to Ginny Moore Kruse and Kathleen T. Horning (1991), this increase in authentic literature of Native Americans and other people of color resulted, in part, from the creation of the Council on Interracial Books for Children, whose staff encouraged publishers to produce books by authors and artists of color. They also attribute the increase to a *Saturday Review* article by Nancy Larrick (1965) titled "The All-White World of Children's Books" that reported the results of a survey she conducted on 5,000 juvenile trade books from 1962 to 1964.

She found that only four-fifths of one per cent of these books included any mention of contemporary African-Americans in either text or illustrations. Larrick's article made a tremendous impact on both publishers and the book-buying public. In this time of great social change, many trade publishers responded to this information and began to meet the new public demand for a more accurate picture of our society by showing a greater sensitivity toward racial diversity in the books they subsequently published for children. (Kruse & Horning, 1991, p. x)

The 1980s and early 1990s, however, have witnessed an outpouring of retellings of Native American stories. Several factors account for this publishing trend. Undoubtedly, the publishers have addressed the renaissance in storytelling all over the United States. "The ancient art of storytelling, muted for decades in living rooms dominated by television, has been coming back. As many as 300 storytelling leagues now meet around the country" (Johnson, 1986, p. B8). Schools are interested in storytelling programs for children and many teachers and librarians link the stories to literacy by introducing folktales and legends in written or book form. Storytelling also introduces children to people from different cultures in an era acutely aware of the multiplicity of cultural traditions. According to Joseph Bruchac (1988):

The stories of the many Native nations of what is now the United States speak to both the Indian and the non-Indian in ways unlike any other tales. Moreover, the many Native American tales already collected and in print constitute one of the richest bodies of myth and legend found anywhere in the world. There are currently to be found in books tens of thousands of Native American tales from the more than 400 oral traditions of North America—tales filled with those memorable and exciting details which attract both storytellers and audiences. (p. 105)

ORAL LITERATURE: IMPORTANCE AND CHARACTERISTICS

Publishers are keenly aware of the revival of public interest in Indian traditions, especially in the last decade leading up to 1992, designated by the Senate and House of Representatives "The Year of the American Indian," with its year-long programs, ceremonies, museum exhibitions, and other activities commemorating the 500 year anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus. Publishers have responded with scores of works about Native American people. Among those published over the past twenty years are many Native American poets and novelists, some of whom have enjoyed national awards and enormous attention. Dell Hymes (1985), an anthropologist who has devoted over thirty years to studying Indian languages and traditions, noted in a review of *American Indian Myths and Legends*, selected and edited by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz, that "old monographs were ransacked for new anthologies" (p. 85).

The importance of oral literature in Native American cultures is undisputed. Indeed, Native American people have never stopped telling their stories. As Sandra A. Rietz (1988) explains:

Oral literatures are more than curious, historic tribal artifacts. Oral stories, though they are very old, have very contemporary functions. Our technology may have changed, but the archetypal memories which may have motivated the beginnings of human literary activity so long ago are still fresh. Oral stories are still evolving as products of human literary creativity. (p. 167)

Native American peoples pass on their histories, cultural traditions, and laws by word of mouth. Oral stories, some serious, some funny, explain how the world was created, how the first people of the tribes originated, and how the sun, moon, stars, lakes, and mountains came to be. Each tribal story explains the origin of every landmark, every plant, and every animal. Some stories tell about greediness, selfishness, or boastfulness and show the correct way that people should treat one another and other beings in the world. They contain practical advice and moral teachings. Some give recipes for ways to heal—how to find the proper roots and medicinal herbs. Some teach tribal laws and the consequences of their violation. Some stories are used to say what cannot be said—stories about dying and how to prepare for dying. Some stories are so sacred and powerful—from “time immemorial”—that they are treated with special respect. Some creation stories, for example, are usually recited in ritual form and a sacred aura and serious demeanor accompanies their telling. Many sacred genesis stories are considered ceremonial and known to specialists like priests or heads of clans or religious societies who learned the narratives from predecessors. Sometimes a tribal creation story is told in different ways. Members of different families in different communities tell their own versions with some even contradicting one another. And some stories today combine older motifs with contemporary themes, reflecting Native American adaptation to hundreds of years of domination by European and Euroamerican societies.

Stories are told during designated periods, usually winter. The restriction on storytelling is still honored by many Native American people to this day. Tehanetorens, a respected Mohawk elder, explains:

The old stories...are very powerful. If you tell a legend in the summer when the crops are in the ground, then the Corn and the Beans, the Squash and the other food plants might listen to that story and forget to grow or produce their fruit. A story is so strong that things in the natural world listen to it, too, and may become confused and not go about their proper ways. (Caduto & Bruchac, 1988a, p. 13)

Long summer days are so crammed with activities that storytelling has to wait until the pace slows down. During the cold winter months, people believe there is more time to relax and receive the teachings in stories.

The stories from more than 400 oral traditions of North America have been recited from memory again and again and passed from older to younger people from generation to generation over hundreds of years to the present day. Like other people who did not rely on writing, Native Americans had keen memories. All the information they knew and needed was held in the collective memories of the individual communities where it was always available through storytelling. After the arrival of Europeans in North America, these stories were first recorded by explorers and settlers and later, during the 1800s, by anthropologists, linguists, and folkloricists. Slapin and Seale (1988) point out that many early collectors "cared deeply about the people whose tales they recorded; they shared their lives, learned their languages and they were zealous about getting it down and getting it down straight. George Grinnel, for instance, spent some 40 years visiting the Cheyenne people every summer, and his material is about as authentic as a person from another culture can get" (p. 186).

ISSUES OF AUTHENTICITY AND DELIVERY IN TRADITIONAL LITERATURE

Unfortunately, not all stories were written exactly as Native American people spoke them. Written versions of stories were sometimes incomplete or inaccurately recorded. Thousands of these stories, accurate or not, have been stored in university ethnology publications, museum and folklore journals, and United States Bureau of American Ethnology volumes. The bureau, established in 1879 as part of the Smithsonian Institution, sent scholars to interview tribal speakers. These days scholars take along tape recorders and video cameras to capture new stories heard at intertribal fairs, powwows, and conferences held in Denver or New York City.

Writers and publishers have reproduced dozens of volumes with these stories aimed at children. These stories, however, according to Malcolm Margolin (1981), a writer and publisher himself, have been "stripped of the richness of human voice and the presence of living audience, cut off from cultural knowledge and tradition, translated into a distant language and set into type,...[and] so diminished that many of them seem formless, empty, and incomprehensible to us" (p. 8). William Schneider (1986), director of the Oral History Program at the University of Alaska, points out that other changes occur when oral stories are converted to written form:

No longer is the elder speaking to the privileged few; everyone who can read becomes a potential member of the audience regardless of how much they know or do not know about the culture. In the oral setting the audience is controlled, limited, and prescribed by the storyteller and the cultural group. When the story is written, the storyteller has no control over who will read the stories, nor does he know what clarification

they will need....In the written form, the role of interpreter is taken out of the speaker's hands. Sometimes it is taken up by a writer who puts the book together; often it is left out.... (p. 17)

Ideally, Native American stories should be spoken aloud and not read. Traditional storytelling required that people come together and listen. American Indian storytelling was and still is an occasion for a communal experience when Native American people come together to share their dynamic past. After an evening meal, an established storyteller gathered people of all ages around him or her to play the drum, sing songs, and tell stories about their Native American heritage and traditions. As Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac (1988a) note: "Because Native American cultures had an intuitive understanding of this powerful role of myth and the cross-generational value of stories, people of all ages gathered around when a story was told...we know of no place where storytelling was 'just for children'" (p. 12). The performance was as important to the storytelling as the story itself. States Malcolm Margolin (1981):

the entire audience—except for the very young children—had heard each story and myth many times. Since everyone knew the plot, the storyteller was free to concentrate instead on voice, cadence, and performance. Especially performance! Imagine, for example, a rainy winter night. People have crowded into the assembly house or large dwelling. A fire is lit—it crackles and smokes from the moisture in the wood—and the storyteller launches forth, voice rising and falling; now talking, now singing; adopting the tone of one character, then another; shouting, whispering, grunting, wheedling, laughing—and all in a language molded to the story by centuries of previous performances; all in an energized setting in which family and friends are crowded together. (p. 7)

Further, the interaction between the storyteller and the youngsters and others in the audience becomes a dramatic performance, "each presentation is marked by the personalities of those present, and every telling is slightly different, shaped by the things that have happened before, the relationships between those present, and the intent of the teller...the experience cannot be completely repeated in either written or recorded form" (Schneider, 1986, p. 17).

In some cultures, stories are a possession. The owner of a story shares it with the audience. William Schneider (1986) notes: "Often [a story] is a gift to be listened to, but cannot be repeated except by the owner....The teller chooses to give his story to an audience he selects; the audience feels privileged to participate in the session and agrees to honor the story by upholding whatever ownership is recognized within the culture" (p. 17). Caduto and Bruchac (1988a) also point out that: "In some Native American cultures, certain stories and certain songs were seen as the property of special groups or individuals. Only those people or groups could tell such stories and

there might be restrictions as to who could tell them and when. To this day many Native American people guard their stories from outsiders" (p. 12). And in putting together their book *Keepers of the Earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children*, Caduto and Bruchac retold stories that were already in print and they "tried to avoid using stories which might be regarded as "too sacred" to use, even with care, in a book" (p. 12).

Other authors also proceed with great care when retelling Native American stories. In her book, *North American Indian Stories: More Earthmaker's Tales*, Gretchen Will Mayo (1990) provides brief notes about storytelling for her readers. She points out:

loving a good story, Indians wove parts of some European folktales into their own. Some legends, of course, were sacred and could never be given away or changed, even to this day. In early days, the time and setting for storytelling was very important. Rules had to be followed, although the rules varied from tribe to tribe. Like many other tribes, the Blackfoot insisted on telling their legends after dark and in the wintertime. (n.p.)

Following the stories, Mayo lists her sources which permits any reader to verify authenticity. The absence of sources makes it impossible to see how closely an author has adhered to or departed from the original by embroidering his or her own details, thus tampering with and inauthenticating the story. Slapin and Seale (1988), who review books with Native American traditional stories, wonder "when writers don't happen to mention where they got their stories, whether they are afraid we might go back and check up on them" (p. 337).

Dell Hymes (1985), who "has spent thirty years studying Indian...traditions," cares deeply about attributing the stories in an appropriate way. He states that the origin of stories is often inaccurate or is not given at all. He answers the question "Why care about the names of Indians long dead, unless one is descended from them?" by suggesting that:

The fundamental challenge to all of us is to realize that the stories told years ago, like those told today, come from individuals. Personal creative use of tradition did not begin in our lifetime. It is as old as the narrative art itself. True, the older collectors helped to obscure that fact. They usually gave the names of their sources, and thanked them, but would publish stories told by a single person as if they stood for a whole community....The individual sources, then, are in a sense creators as well as preservers. When what they said is accurately recorded, and the devices and designs they employed are understood, one can hear both a tribal art and a personal voice. (p. 85)

Many examples can be found in children's books that honor the original creator and preserver of the published story. In Anne Cameron's (1985) *How the Loon Lost Her Voice*, the author tells her readers: "When I was growing up on Vancouver Island, I met a woman who was a storyteller. She shared many stories with me,

and later, gave me permission to share them with others. This woman's name was KLOPINUM. In English, her name means 'Keeper of the River of Copper'" (n.p.). In *Baby Rattlesnake*, a legend told by Te Ata (1989) (a 92-year old internationally acclaimed Chickasaw storyteller from contemporary Oklahoma) and adapted by Lynn Moroney, readers are told that:

Oklahoma storyteller Lynn Moroney, herself part Indian, had admired Te Ata for years and finally asked her permission to retell the story of *Baby Rattlesnake*. At first the answer was no, but when Te Ata came to a story-telling festival organized by Lynn and heard the younger woman tell her own stories, Te Ata was so impressed that she gave Lynn her blessing to tell this story and pass it on to others through the medium of a book. (p. 32)

Tipi Press in Chamberlain, South Dakota, has published a book by Moses Nelson Big Crow (1987) called *A Legend from Crazy Horse Clan*. The title clearly establishes for readers that the story belongs to his family and clan. In *Old Father Story Teller*, Santa Clara Pueblo artist Pablita Velarde shares the stories of her people handed down to her by her grandfather and great-grandfather. In a collection of legends told by Arizona Indian children and collected by Byrd Baylor (1976), *And It Is Still That Way*, each child's name and tribal affiliation is given. Baylor tells in her introduction that she and the Native American children "talked about storytelling in the Indian way. We talked about how it feels to hear stories that aren't made up new and written down in somebody else's book but are as old as your tribe and are told and sung and chanted by people of your own family, your own clan" (p. viii). In a curriculum about New England's Native American peoples by Barbara Robinson (1988), the Wampanoag creation story concludes with the note: "Attributed to Chief Red Shell, Historian of the Nauset Wampanoag Tribe and Chief Wild Horse, Wampanoag Champion of the Mashpee. Origin probably Delaware (Nanepashemet, personal communication; Simmons, 1986, p. 215). Reprinted from Reynard, Chatham Historical Society, 1986" (p. 111). In the Wabanaki curriculum by the American Friends Service Committee (1989), legends such as "Adventures of Master Rabbit" are footnoted with: "The source of this legend is *The Algonquin Legends of New England* by Charles G. Leland, Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1884. This particular "Master Rabbit" legend is Passamaquoddy and was told to Leland by Tomah Josephs. The wording has been changed somewhat to make the story easier for students to read" (p. C-21). In *The Naked Bear: Folktales of the Iroquois*, John Bierhorst (1987) spends several pages discussing his sources. In *The People Shall Continue*, Simon Ortiz (1977) tells his own epic story of Native American people from creation to the present day in traditional oral narrative style.

Not all writers and publishers have been so careful with the stories told by Native Americans. In *Back in the Beforetime: Tales of the California Indians*, retold by Jane Louise Curry (1987), there is no attribution. Award winning author William Toye (1979) never mentions his source(s) in *The Fire Stealer*. And the recent series (1990) of *Native American Legends* supplies no sources for the stories Terri Cohlene retells in each of the six books. Many more books neglect to mention the original storyteller or sources.

Publishers and adapters alike, then, need to supply their exact sources to underscore the fact that stories belong to Native American individuals, families, clans, or tribes and to attribute the proper authorship to the original storytellers. This will enable readers who are so inclined to verify documentation.

NONFICTION BOOKS

Two studies, one written by Mary Gloyne Byler in 1973 (*American Indian Authors for Young Readers: A Selected Bibliography* published by the New York-based Association on American Indian Affairs) and the other written by Robert B. Moore and Arlene Hirschfelder in 1977 ("Feathers, Tomahawks, and Tipis: A Study of Stereotyped 'Indian' Imagery in Children's Picture Books" in *Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes* published by the New York-based Council on Interracial Books for Children) revealed numerous problems in children's nonfiction books about Indians. Since many of the books discussed in these studies remain on library shelves or have been reprinted, they continue to misinform young readers.

Too many history books, particularly those about Indians west of the Mississippi River or those about nineteenth-century wars with Indians, dwell on Indian brutality. These books rarely state that Indians attempted to protect their lands, their homes, and their families from invasion by Euroamericans. The books seldom tell that Indians almost universally greeted missionaries, Spanish, English, and others with friendliness and practical help. They rarely tell that conflicts eventually erupted over land, broken promises, and broken treaties. They seldom explain that methods Indians used to obtain food, clothing, shelter—all land dependent—clashed with economies of Euroamerican settlers who destroyed miles of Indian food sites, homesites, sacred sites, and animal preserves. Mary Gloyne Byler (1973) points out in her study:

Undoubtedly it is accurate that settlers were threatened by, and afraid of, Indians, but Indians were equally, if not more, threatened by the settlers and they had much more to lose. The history books and story books seldom make it clear that Native Americans in fighting back, were defending their homes and families and were not just being malicious. (p. 8)

The two studies showed that too many books are filled with words that trigger negative and derogatory images of American Indians. "Squaw," "brave," and "papoose" do not evoke the same images as do the words "woman," "man," "baby." The practice of using pejorative terms still continues today, although to a lesser degree. In a 1985 book, *Indian Festivals*, Keith Brandt should have used "man" when he wrote: "If a brave killed more game than his family could eat..." (p. 15). In a 1990 book, *Costumes*, Clare Beaton shows children how to dress as a "squaw." The studies showed that writers used a dual system of labeling Indian and Euroamerican behavior. Writers call battles won by Euroamericans "victories" and battles won by Indians are called "massacres." Writers convey the idea that Euroamericans who protected their homelands were patriots. Indians who did likewise were murderers. Writers call people who follow their jobs or who go to work or go on vacation "travelers," "commuters," "vacationers." Indians whose job it was to hunt buffalo or Indians who moved between their winter and summer homes or who went on religious pilgrimages were "wanderers" or "roamers." Roaming and wandering describe people—or animals—moving without purpose or direction. Writers call the lands that Euroamericans settled "wilderness." Indians called these lands their "homelands" or "sacred geography." Writers call Euroamericans who settled on Indian homelands "settlers." Indians called them "trespassers" or "invaders." Writers call Indian clothing "costumes." Indians call them "tribal dress," "clothes," "regalia."

Too many books contain distortions of Indian cultural practices or historical facts. A book distorts historical truth when the writer tells children that "Columbus discovered America." Many books still do. A book distorts the reality of contemporary Indian America when a writer titles it "How the Indians Lived." Many books written decades ago, and still on library shelves, tell youngsters Indians vanished: "Now, in all of Georgia and Alabama, there is nothing left of the nation that had lived there for a thousand years before the white man came. The Cherokees are gone..." (Bealer, 1972, p. 84). The presence of the Southeastern Cherokee Confederacy in Leesburg, Georgia, and the Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokees in Cairo contradicts this inaccurate statement. And Sonia Bleeker's sixteen-book series about American Indian tribes, published during the 1950s by William Morrow, contains dated or inaccurate information that continues to misinform young readers about Native American realities in the 1990s. Fortunately, newer series are available, although these are not without their problems as well.

There are far too many books for children with ethnocentric statements about Native American people. Too many books state that

Indians had no schools or alphabets or books before Euroamericans. And then the writers hasten to explain that Indians had elders or teachers—their parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles—who told them stories that gave them information. These statements suggest to children that Euroamerican education practices—schools, alphabets, and books—are superior to Indian education practices. The writers undermine Indian educational practices and suggest Indian methods are less worthwhile. Writers promote cultural awareness when they explain, without qualifications, that Indian elders who teach and tell stories to Indian youngsters (and they still do) are as important to Indian people as teachers in school buildings. Writers promote cultural understanding when they explain that oral stories of Native American peoples are like curricula that teach what Indian people know about themselves and their universe and their histories. These stories are as valuable and valid to Indian people as alphabets, books, and schools are to Euroamerican people.

Far too many books omit cultural and historical information about Native Americans. In a foreword to *American Indian Stereotypes in the World of Children* edited by Arlene B. Hirschfelder (1982), Michael Dorris wrote: “To deprive our children (who grow up to become no less deprived adults) access to the wealth and sophistication of traditional Native American societies is indefensible” (p. vii). Yet writers have routinely omitted this information. Few discussed the harmonious ways Native Americans coexist with nature, their ingenious use of plants and animals to produce food, clothing, and shelter, and their respect for the natural world. Few discuss close knit loving Native American family life, respect for elders, the care with which children are raised, and the dynamic values of sharing and hospitality. Few writers tell about the traditional and changing roles of American Indian women who have adapted to Euroamerican culture while at the same time perpetuating Native American values. Few writers discuss spiritual and philosophical beliefs or the great variety of religious experiences among Native Americans. Few writers discuss the contributions Indian people have made to their own cultures. Some, but not many, discuss Native American knowledge of agronomy, architecture, astronomy, geology, irrigation, mathematics, and medicine.

Fortunately, over the last decade, Indian and non-Indian writers, published by Native American, mainstream, and small presses, have begun to fill this void with books that accurately depict American Indian cultural traditions. Several photo essay books published in 1990-93 illuminate ancient traditions that continue to thrive, show close-knit loving Native American families, and treat spiritual traditions with respect. (Holiday House published two books by Diane

Hoyt-Goldsmith and Lawrence Migdale, photographer: *Totem Pole* in 1990, *Pueblo Storyteller* in 1991, *Arctic Hunter* in 1992, and *Cherokee Summer* in 1993. Cobblehill published Marcia Keegan's *Pueblo Boy: Growing Up in Two Worlds* in 1991.) A number of books provide accurate treatments of Native American housing traditions. Among them are three by Charlotte Yue and David Yue: *The Tipi: A Center of Native American Life* (1984), *The Pueblo* (1986), and *The Igloo* (1988). Nashone (1989) has written *Where Indians Live: American Indian Houses*. Other books, like the earlier mentioned *Keepers of the Earth* and *Keepers of the Animals: Native American Stories and Wildlife Activities*, both written by Michael Caduto and Joseph Bruchac, address Native American environmental concerns. Gary McLain (1990), author of *The Indian Way: Learning to Communicate with Mother Earth*, describes for young readers, ages eight and up, the way Native Americans have lived in harmony with "Mother Earth, Father Sky, and all living things" (n.p.). The second part of the book provides activities that children can do to achieve a closer bond with the earth. Native practitioners and educators, however, may question some of the suggested activities aimed at children which draw on sacred practices of Native Americans. A 1990 Franklin Watts book, *North American Indian Survival Skills* by Karen Liptak, also describes how North American Indians relied on Mother Earth to survive: "Yet, no matter where they lived, the Indians treated Mother Earth with great respect" (p. 9). With the help of Willy Whitefeather of Cherokee descent, the writer describes the ingenuity of Indians who were (and are) able to survive in a variety of regions. In another book about Native American ingenuity, Henry Tall Bull and Tom Weist (n.d.) tell a story about men who skillfully fight forest fires in *Northern Cheyenne Fire Fighters*.

Some publishers who are aware of the interest in Native American spiritual traditions have begun to issue books about this topic for younger readers. One of the best examples is *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway* by Edward Benton-Banai (1979), executive director of the Red School House in St. Paul, Minnesota, a full-blooded Wisconsin Ojibway of the Fish Clan and a spiritual teacher of the Lac Court Oreilles Band of the Ojibway Tribe. He offers readers an accurate account of the culture, history, and philosophy of the Ojibway Nation in a book Slapin and Seale (1988) call "a spiritual odyssey as well as an historical one..." (p. 168). The author states that he "has been careful not to profane any of the Ojibway teachings. He has attempted to leave the sacred teachings intact where their complete form has been proclaimed by ritual" (p. ii). He tells the Ojibway Creation Story, takes the readers through a Midewiwin Ceremony, the clan system, the sweat lodge ceremony, as well as other

cultural material. Benton-Banai concludes with the history of Ojibway encounters with settlers, traders, missionaries, and federal armies which he tells with clarity and honesty.

Other books lack this clarity and honesty, however. In 1990, Childrens Press issued *Black Elk: A Man with a Vision* (Greene), a biography about the renowned Oglala Lakota medicine man and the first attempt to describe for young people the life of this important Native American healer. Although the author sticks to the material in *Black Elk Speaks* as told through John G. Neihardt, originally published in 1932, this retelling "of Black Elk's vision is so oversimplified that it sounds ridiculous and muddled" (p. 6), according to Naomi Caldwell-Wood and Lisa A. Mitten (1991), both with the American Indian Library Association.

In the book *Indian Festivals*, by Keith Brandt (1985), the author misinterprets and oversimplifies the Plains Sun Dance by suggesting: "The dance symbolized the struggle of the human soul to free itself from the bonds of the body" (p. 22). Actually, the Sun Dance, one of the best known religious ceremonies in Native North America, was conducted by over twenty tribes of the Plains region for different reasons. Indeed, the name of the dance itself, its origin, purpose, and ritual differed from group to group. In general, the dance was and is held to pray for the renewal of the people and the earth, to give thanks, to fulfill a vow, to pray for fertility and plenty, to protect the people from danger or illness, and for other religious purposes. Brandt also tells readers that the great festivals of the tribes of the Northwest Coast are no longer held (p. 30). While it is true that the Canadian government made it a criminal offense to hold a potlatch, people held potlatches in secret. When the government lifted its ban in 1951, serious—but not irreversible—damage had been done to potlatching rites. Once lengthy affairs, today evening-long potlatches continue the ritual and tradition.

In his book *Buffalo Hunt*, Russell Freedman (1988) misrepresents Native American ritual practices in the chapter "Buffalo Magic." He calls a buffalo skull mounted on a rock a "magical device" (p. 18) to attract buffalo herds and calls buffalo hearts strewn across the plains "magical power" (p. 38) to renew the herd. Calling sacred power objects "magical devices" demeans them, strips them of spirituality, and relegates them to the realm of make believe.

Evelyn Wolfson's (1988) *Abenaki to Zuni: A Dictionary of Native American Tribes* contains so many inaccuracies about Native American spiritual traditions that these make it an unreliable reference source for that subject. A few examples show why. Wolfson states that the Cayugas and Senecas (members of the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy) observed an eight-day Midwinter Ceremony while the

Onondagas (also members of the Six Nations Confederacy) observed this same ceremony for four days. She does not tell that the Mohawks and Oneidas (members of the Six Nations Confederacy) also observe this sacred ceremony which in fact lasts nine days for all the tribes. There is also no information about spiritual traditions of the Tuscaroras, members of the Six Nations Confederacy as well. For the Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, and Seneca, she never explains the purpose of the Midwinter Ceremony but dwells instead on the arrival of the False Face Society with its "grotesque, wooden masks" (p. 41). For the Onondaga, she writes that: "Each new year they hold a four-day celebration called the Midwinter Ceremony, when they thank the spirits for a bountiful harvest" (p. 133). There is much more to the ceremony than the author's explanation suggests. The masks to which the author refers in the Cayuga and Seneca entries are sacred medicine masks that represent the power of the original medicine beings. "Grotesque" ridicules them and misrepresents their sacred functions during religious ceremonies. Wolfson also misinterprets the "Blackfoot" religious celebration ("the Sun Dance, which is a series of feasts, dances, fasts, and exhibitions of self-torture") (p. 32) and the Teton (Sioux) who hold a Sun Dance each summer during which they "fast, feast, dance, and practice self-torture" (p. 160). Blackfeet and Sioux male dancers pledged (but did not actually perform) and did not exhibit, flesh offerings, made sacrifices (but did not practice self-torture) of their bodies. These sacred functions took place on behalf of the earth, people, and for other purposes.

With the current interest in Native American topics, some publishers have turned out nonfiction titles in series. For young readers, Franklin Watts publishers has a series of books about six tribes which surveys each tribe's cultural traits, past and present, and which is enriched with plenty of colorful photographs. Childrens Press has published at least nineteen "New True" books about tribes, introducing youngsters to the histories and cultures of each people, along with photographs of historic and present-day Indians. Educators should use these books with caution, however, as the writers oversimplify or misinterpret cultural information. For example, in *The Sioux* (1984), the author states the Santee, Middle (called Yankton in the book), and Teton divisions of the Sioux Tribe "did not speak the same language" (p. 12) when indeed all divisions spoke dialects of the Siouan language. Holiday House announced, in early 1993, its "The First American Books" series beginning with *The Sioux* and *The Navajo*, both by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, Rosebud Sioux author. Lerner Publications Company in Minneapolis launched its "We are Still Here: American Indians Today" series. Gordon Requisti, Leech Lake Ojibway, and photographer Dale

Kakkak, Menominee, tell the story of rice harvesting in Minnesota in *The Sacred Harvest: Ojibway Wild Rice Gathering* and Russell M. Peters, Wampanoag, and photographer John Madama, relate the story of a traditional clam bake of the Massachusetts Wampanoags.

For older readers, Chelsea House has published four dozen books about Indian tribes, each filled with color and black-and-white illustrations and written by anthropologists, historians, or other specialists who have had field experiences with the tribes that they write about. Facts on File has published an eight-volume "The First American Series" organized on a geographical basis (Indians of the Plains, California Indians, and so on). Each volume encompasses all the tribes of a particular area of North America. These books, illustrated with dozens of color and black-and-white photographs, cover the cultures, relations with Euroamericans, and current status of the tribes.

In addition to series about tribes, there are a number of series with biographies of notable American Indians. Twenty years ago, Dillon Press published numerous Indian biographies introducing youngsters to artists such as Pablita Velarde and Michael Naranjo, both Santa Clara Pueblo; Daisey Nampeyo, Hopi; George Morrison, Chippewa; Maria Martinez, San Ildefonso Pueblo; and Oscar Howe, Sioux; politicians such as William Beltz, Inuit and president of the first Senate of the State of Alaska; military figures such as Chief Joseph, Nez Perce; Crazy Horse, Oglala Lakota; Geronimo, Apache, and Osceola, Seminole; an athlete, Jim Thorpe, Sac and Fox; a dancer, Maria Tallchief, Osage; and a historian, William Warren, Chippewa. Troll Associates offers a series of biographies which include Black Hawk, Chief Joseph, Pocahontas, Sacajawea, Osceola, Pontiac, Sequoia, Sitting Bull, Tecumseh, and Squanto, all published in 1979. Slapin and Seale (1988) feel these ten biographies offer up "formula non-fiction....All of these books are filled with fictionalized conversations....These books feed directly into the myths of superiority and infallibility of white American institutions—myths that are force-fed to children in school" (pp. 366-68). Raintree Publishers has released eight of a planned twenty-four book series (*American Indian Stories*) about the life and achievements of important American Indians. Herman Viola of the Smithsonian Institution and Robert Kvasnicka of the National Archives are involved in writing and editing these volumes. Raintree has released books about Geronimo, Apache; Hole-in-the-Day, Chippewa; Carlos Montezuma, Yavapai; Plenty Coups, Crow; John Ross, Cherokee; Sitting Bull, Sioux; Jim Thorpe, Sac and Fox; and Sarah Winnemucca, Paiute. Silver Burdett Press has its "Alvin Josephy Biography Series

of American Indians" which includes books about Geronimo, Hiawatha, King Philip, Sequoia, Sitting Bull, and Tecumseh.

Years ago, most writers omitted discussions of European expansion and the treatment Indians received from the federal and state governments. Most writers omitted discussions of the role European diseases played in killing more Indian people than did the conflicts between Indians and Euroamericans. Few writers discussed Native American struggles to maintain their sovereignty, cultural practices, and spirituality in a modern world. And most writers omitted discussions of contemporary issues facing Indian nations including struggles over treaty rights, land, water rights, minerals, timber, fishing, religious freedom, and adjustments to life on reservations and in cities and rural areas where more than half of the Native American population now lives.

Again, fortunately, some Indian and non-Indian writers have tackled these issues over the past decade. Brent Ashabranner (1982) dealt with the confrontation between the Northern Cheyenne and energy companies in *Morning Star, Black Sun: The Northern Cheyenne Indians and America's Energy Crisis*. He wrote about the struggle of young Native American people to remain Indian while at the same time learning to make it in the dominant culture in *To Live in Two Worlds: American Indian Youth Today* (Ashabranner, 1984). The New Mexico People & Energy Collective (1981) wrote about Emma, a Navajo woman who struggled with coal and power plants on her reservation near the Four Corners in *Red Ribbons for Emma*. Jeanne Heuving (1979) described the efforts of the Suquamish of the Puget Sound area to hold on to traditions while using modern technology in *Suquamish Today*. In his book *Black Hills: Sacred Hills* (1987), Tom Charging Eagle told about the importance of this sacred site to Dakota people and its appropriation by the U.S. government, an act described by the U.S. Court of Claims in 1975 as "a more rank and ripe case of dishonorable dealings will never in all probability be found in our history." Educators can find more books like those cited earlier that honestly and realistically portray contemporary issues facing Native American people.

FICTION BOOKS

Over the past twenty-five years, scholars have found many problems in children's fiction about American Indians. In her 1972 University of Chicago Master of Arts dissertation, Martha Joan Moss investigated the portrayal of American Indians in fiction written for young readers, seventh to twelfth grades, from 1960 to 1971. After analyzing sixty-three works of fiction, she concluded in her abstract (p. i) that "although some recent works portray the American Indian

honestly and sympathetically, many inaccurate or dishonest works are still available." She also cited the research findings of Elaine Garwin who analyzed the treatment of Indians in juvenile fiction published between 1908 and 1958 and found the presentation of Indians far from representative or accurate. In 1973, Mary Gloyne Byler, who examined more than 600 books, many of them novels for children, reported stereotyping, depersonalization, ridicule, parody, inauthenticity, cultural vandalism, and bias in children's books with Indian characters. Hap Gilliland (1980), professor of education at Eastern Montana College, found that many of the fiction books written before 1965 contained misinformation, misinterpretation, and misconception. "Many of the books were written by nonIndian authors who had no personal knowledge of the Indian and were more concerned with writing a good adventure story than giving a true picture of Indian life" (p. 12). Although he noticed a great change between 1965 and 1980 ("Editors are refusing to publish books which obviously downgrade any of our minority groups or their cultures" [p. 16]), he still found that "although the majority of books published in the last dozen years attempt to tell the truth, many authors are still ignorant of the facts, and some of these are still getting their writing published" (p. 16). He concluded, "many of the more recent books [published after 1965], give a very biased picture of Indian life. They downgrade the Indian either by the statement of false concepts, stereotypes, omission of facts, or by the innuendos of vocabulary and semantics" (p. 18).

In his study, Raymond William Stedman (1982), professor of English and Communication at Bucks County Community College, listed ten works by non-Indians arguing that "many pre-1970s juvenile novels opened paths to understanding" (p. 182), but he pointed out that these novels faced "continued competition for library space or bookclub listings from the wild and woolly school of children's novels, as exemplified by the one sided award winner of 1941, Walter D. Edmonds's *The Matchlock Gun*" (p. 182). About this novel, Slapin and Seale (1988) stated:

In 1941, Walter D. Edmonds received the Newbery Medal, awarded for "one of the most distinguished contributions to American literature for children," for *The Matchlock Gun*. The book has been reprinted 25 times since then, and is currently available....The story is ominous, filled with foreboding, and fear of the Indians, who, we know, are going to come. The illustrations are luminous, and they show Indians, one behind the other, hunched over, menace on two feet; dancing around the leaping flames of burning cabins, always in darkness, always terrifying....No reason is given for the Native attack on this decent and appealing little family....(pp. 16-17)

In 1986, Dartmouth College student Deborah Doyle-Schechtman studied forty-eight Indian characterizations in books written for children between 1975 and 1985 and found that many of the books contained stereotypes and focused on the "native past." She discovered frequent themes such as "the vision quest; a boy and his horse; white captivity; and war" (p. iii).

Many of the criticisms about fiction books with American Indian themes voiced in these studies persist today. Five novels published since 1989 deal with non-Indians captured or killed by Indians. A young girl during the nineteenth century hates Indians for killing her parents and stealing her brothers in *Jenny of the Tetons* (Gregory, 1989); a community in colonial Massachusetts is raided by Indians and everyone but a young girl is killed or taken hostage in *Only Brave Tomorrows* (Luhmann, 1989); a pioneer girl is captured by Indians in *Maggie Among the Senecas* (Moore, 1987); a ten-year-old girl is kidnapped in 1845 and raised among Sioux Indians in *A Circle Unbroken* (Hotze, 1988); and a Pennsylvania farm girl is abducted and adopted by Allegheny Indians in *I Am Regina* (Keehn, 1991).

Captivity themes are not new. As long ago as 1682, a Massachusetts printing press published America's first significant and best-selling true narrative of Mary Rowlandson's capture and release after eleven weeks by Narragansett Indians. Stedman (1982) points out that: "The scenes of horror or privation that Mary Rowlandson bequeathed to her successors rebound today from printed page or theater screen or picture tube: a shrieking attack on an anxious compound, terrified settlers dragged from their isolated cabins..." (pp. 75-76).

For years, non-Indian writers of juvenile fiction have reworked the popular subject of "white child in Indian captivity." Anna Lee Stensland (1979) noted the popularity of this theme in junior high books and went on to comment: "the white child is usually treated quite well, and in fact is often adopted by Indian parents to replace an Indian son or daughter who has died. In these books the white child grows to love the foster Indian parents and wants to stay with them" (p. 10).

No matter that the Indians eventually redeem themselves in some of these works, the equation of Indians and violent behavior repeated in countless novels and history books for youngsters (written in 1941 or 1991) adds up to the idea that American Indians are menacing, hostile, unfriendly, malicious, in short, downright nasty. In contemporary society, those children socialized to believe kidnapping and killing are wrong become conditioned to consider Indians as "savages," given their predilection to kidnap and kill in so many juvenile novels. Novels with captivity themes rarely convey the fact that "frontier hostilities were not inevitable where fair-mindedness

existed" (Stedman, 1982, p. 182). Further, since captivity-and-kidnapping books, as well as a disproportionate number of other novels about Indians, are set in the past, non-Indian children today struggle with the idea that Indians are contemporary human beings. Constant encounters with stereotypes and other dishonest, inauthentic, and disparaging views of Indians in novels (bolstered by images from television, movies, ads, games, toys, greeting cards, clothing, sports mascots, and so on) distort the social and visual perceptions of non-Indian children and prevent them from developing realistic attitudes about Indian people. Indian children who need to build good self concepts, feelings of worth, and a sense of their place in U.S. history, need to read culturally and historically accurate books about their own people. Constant contacts with specious images of Indians in juvenile novels (and many other media) result in Indian children losing self-esteem and pride in their identity.

Besides the classic captivity stories, other recently published novels for children project a similar Indians are violent theme and win acclaim for their efforts. British author, Lynne Reid Banks has written a trilogy of books—*The Indian in the Cupboard* (1980), *The Return of the Indian* (1986), and *The Secret of the Indian* (1989a). *The Indian in the Cupboard* (1989b), now available in audiocassettes and film, has sold over 50,000 copies in hardcover and more than 1 million in paperback. Slapin and Seale (1988) feel the book abuses child audiences, and Caldwell-Wood and Mitten (1991) feel these books, although classic examples of highly acclaimed books, should be avoided. Despite their being much-loved books, they point out that from the Indian point of view, the trilogy contains horrendous stereotypes:

The miniature toy Indian [Indians portrayed as objects or things] is described as an Iroquois warrior, but is dressed as a movie version of a generic plains Indian "chief," complete with eagle feather headdress. The warrior is described in the most stereotypical terms and speaks in subhuman grunts and partial sentences. He is manipulated by a more powerful white child, fostering the image of the simple and naive Indian whose contact with the white man can only benefit him and his people. (p. 2)

In *The Return of the Indian*, the following passage equates Indians with violence and dogs:

He saw an Indian making straight for him. His face, in the torchlight, was twisted with fury. For a second Omri saw, under the shaven scalp decorated with a single scalp..., the mindless destructive face of a skinhead just before he lashed out....The Algonquin licked his lips, snarling like the dog....Their faces...were wild, distorted, terrifying masks of hatred and rage... (pp. 159, 158)

Forty years earlier, Walter D. Edmonds offered the same equation in *The Matchlock Gun*: "There were five of them, dark shapes on

the road, coming from the brick house. They hardly looked like men, the way they moved. They were trotting, stooped over, first one and then another coming up, like dogs sifting up to the scent of food" (p. 39).

Caldwell-Wood and Mitten address the stark differences of opinion between Native American reviewers who consider demeaning vocabulary, stereotyping in text and illustrations, and distorted history as important as literary techniques and non-Indian reviewers who look at novels about Indians from a literary perspective:

There are plenty of "good" books—i.e. well-written, exciting, from respected authors, much-loved by their readers, with well-developed characters—that are terrible when examined with the criteria of whether the Native American(s) depicted in them are accurately or even humanly portrayed. For the most part, this criticism is directed at fictional works, where the greatest stereotypes and wildest imaginings about Indians still hold sway. (p. 1)

In recent children's fiction, some writers have trivialized, misused, or defiled Native American spiritual traditions. For example, Welwyn Wilton Katz (1987), author of *False Face*, wrote a story about teenagers who unearth an old Iroquois false face mask that harbors an evil power. False face masks are a sacred and integral part of traditional Iroquois religion practiced today on Iroquois reservations in the United States and Canada. Describing the mask as "an absolute evil amounts to religious intolerance and goes far in fostering the conception of native, non-Christian religions as savage pagan rituals" (Caldwell-Wood & Mitten, 1991, p. 6).

Vision quests are currently in vogue and in demand by a New Age generation. Today, as in the past, vision quests, which vary from one tribal culture to another, involve the ritual seeking of communication with the spirit world by a solitary individual who prepares under the guidance of one or more medicine people. The quest, which is not an adventure for the person seeking a vision, may entail great suffering and difficulty. It may take place at adolescence, in adulthood, or in maturity. In many cultures, the quest is associated only with males, but, in others, females also undergo the rite. The quest, which may last from one to four days, includes praying, fasting, and making offerings to the spirits. Children's writers, too, interested in Native American spiritual traditions, have mixed this important Native American ritual into their historical and contemporary novels without regard, however, for accuracy. In *Dawn Rider*, Jan Hudson (1990) created a sixteen-year-old girl who helped her friend with his vision quest during the early eighteenth century—an unlikely scenario since only practiced medicine people prepared young people about to embark on their vision quests. In *Spirit Quest*, by Susan Sharpe (1991), a white fifth-grader and a

Quileute Indian boy decide they want to go on a modern version of the vision quest. In a Golden Kite Honor Book, *Vision Quest*, Pamela F. Service (1989) tosses in sketchy contrived information about vision quests in her contemporary novel about two teens chasing pot hunters around the Nevada desert.

Fortunately, not all children's fiction about Indians contains stereotypes and distortions. Some Indian and non-Indian authors have written fine works that combine authenticity and action. Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve's novels (1972a, 1972b, unfortunately out of print) about contemporary South Dakota reservation life draw on her own Rosebud Sioux background and convey accurate cultural information and excitement. James Houston's novels about the struggles of Inuit people to survive in one of the most challenging environments on earth combine accurate cultural information, frank realism, plus plenty of action. His books show people struggling with blizzards, starvation for lack of game, and foraging bears. Janet Campbell Hale (1974) draws on her Coeur d'Alene heritage in *The Owl's Song* to portray a young Indian boy's struggle to survive in a world determined to erase his identity. Well-known Modoc author, Michael Dorris, wrote his first book for children, *Morning Girl*, a portrait of a family living on a Bahamian Island on the eve of Columbus's discovery of the Americas.

The earlier discussion offers examples of novels that speak to youngsters with authentic voices and that describe Native American life and history without stereotypes, condescension, or gratuitous violence. There are others as well. Educators should celebrate these efforts rather than commend those novels that misinterpret Native American histories and cultures. By the same token, educators who applaud nonfiction works filled with accurate information and Native American stories told with great care, counter the cultural distortions that haunt the world of Native American people today. The heightened interest in Native American culture must be tempered with concern for acquiring accurate books that show respect for Native American traditions and histories.

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The School Library Media Center and the Promotion of Literature for Hispanic Children

ADELA ARTOLA ALLEN

ABSTRACT

IN THIS ARTICLE, the author presents a survey designed to ascertain the degree of access to children's literature in eight urban areas in the United States known to have a high population of Hispanic residents. The instrument surveyed the responses of media specialists in a sample of schools serving students in kindergarten through eighth grade in San Diego, California; Phoenix, Arizona; Tucson, Arizona; Albuquerque, New Mexico; El Paso, Texas; Houston, Texas; Miami, Florida; and Denver, Colorado. Among the findings significant to the acquisition of literature in Spanish for young people were a high percentage (62 percent) of media specialists and associated personnel who have little or no knowledge of the Spanish language. Many collections (more than 50 percent of those surveyed) had relatively few Spanish books available for students. The author points out the strong need for increased attention to allocations, Spanish language fluency for professional and nonprofessional staff members (particularly those influencing the acquisition of Spanish language materials), and the need for additional activities which would help encourage the initial motivation to read and promote the reading experience itself.

INTRODUCTION

By the year 2000, one out of every four American public schoolchildren will come from a minority ethnic group. This

multicultural student body, reflecting the country's pluralistic society, dictates immediate attention in terms of available resources.

As stated in *Information Power* (American Association of School Librarians & Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1988), one of the missions and challenges of today's school library media programs is to: "Provide resources and learning activities that represent a diversity of experiences, opinions, social and cultural perspectives, supporting the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are prerequisite to effective and responsible citizenship in a democracy" (p. 2). School library media centers, in order to respond to these demographic changes, must re-examine their standards and decisions regarding information access in order to fulfill the needs of the current and future user population.

This article reports the findings of a survey of school library media centers with large enrollments of Hispanic children in eight large urban centers. The principal goal was to develop an understanding of the availability of Spanish language literature in schools with large populations of Spanish-dominant students.

A questionnaire was developed and evaluated by a panel for content validity, reliability, wording, and time needed to complete the form. This four-person panel consisted of one university professor of children's literature, one state certified librarian with a Ph.D. in reading, one librarian with an M.L.S., and one graduate research assistant finishing an M.L.S. degree. Both librarians were highly experienced in working with bilingual students. Following the panelists' review and evaluation of the first draft, recommendations were incorporated, including the unanimous decision to reduce significantly the number of questions on the survey. Three hundred and five survey questionnaires were mailed to public schools in San Diego, California; Phoenix, Arizona; Tucson, Arizona; Albuquerque, New Mexico; El Paso, Texas; Houston, Texas; Miami, Florida; and Denver, Colorado. These cities were selected because of the large populations of Hispanic families.

The schools, serving students from kindergarten through eighth grade, were identified as having a large number of Hispanic children enrolled. The surveys were addressed to the school library media specialist, librarian, or person in charge of the library. The cover letter enclosed with the survey assured respondents' anonymity unless they volunteered to be interviewed by phone or wished to be quoted in the article (see Appendix A for a copy of the survey).

Sixty-two schools completed questionnaires, which represents about 20 percent of the questionnaires distributed. Usable

questionnaires were received from all eight areas canvassed. School library media specialists or librarians were the only respondents. No follow-up was made.

METHODOLOGY

The instrument used to conduct this study consisted of twenty-nine questions and a final note. Four questions requested demographic data concerning the respondent; five questions addressed the school's demographics; one question requested information regarding the number of personnel in the library and their Spanish language fluency; one question asked respondents to rate their knowledge of the subgroups that comprise the Hispanic ethnic group; five questions addressed the media centers' collections of Spanish and English materials and budget allocations for each; and six questions inquired as to the review, selection, and purchase of Spanish materials and cooperation with other institutions. In two questions, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not their media centers provided each of twenty selected activities and services, and in which language(s) they were performed. One question asked participants to list the most successful books used with Hispanic children. Finally, three open-ended questions, requiring narrative responses, were designed to reveal school library media specialists' viewpoints regarding specific positive and negative trends in serving Spanish-dominant children. The last narrative question asked respondents to describe their "greatest needs and concerns regarding Hispanic children's literature." A final note asked respondents to list "the exciting and unique activities being held in their libraries."

Data analysis of the multiple-choice questions was made by converting the responses into frequencies and percentages. Analysis of the open-ended questions was done by clustering responses that were similar and converting them into frequencies.

A second analysis was made to ensure that respondents did not represent a single biased group. Interestingly, the returned surveys ranged from very limited responses to highly detailed ones and spanned from enthusiasm for linguistic and cultural diversity to rejection of special services for any given group of students.

The findings of the survey are reported in the following major categories: (1) The demographics and linguistic profile of the students and the community in this study; (2) the school library media specialists and their personnel; (3) the media center's holdings and budgetary allocations; (4) review, selection, and acquisition of Spanish materials; (5) the book selection process; (6) the activities and events held in or sponsored by the library; (7) the positive trends in Hispanic children's literature; (8) the negative trends, concerns, and needs

regarding access to Spanish children's literature by Hispanic children; (9) a list of successful media center activities; and (10) the author's recommendations to school administrators and library media specialists as suggested by the survey results.

THE SCHOOLS, THE STUDENT BODY, THEIR LANGUAGE, AND THE COMMUNITY

The breakdown of Hispanic students in the sixty-two schools surveyed is as follows: Eight schools had less than a 30 percent Hispanic student body; fourteen schools had a 31 to 60 percent Hispanic student population; sixteen schools had a 61 to 80 percent Hispanic enrollment; twenty-one schools had an 81 to 100 percent Hispanic population; and three schools did not respond to this question. The communities in which the schoolchildren lived, in terms of their Hispanic populations, are as follows: five schools were located in communities that had less than a 30 percent Hispanic population; twelve schools were found in communities with 31 to 50 percent Hispanics; thirteen schools were in Hispanic communities of 51 to 70 percent; sixteen had a Hispanic population of 71 to 90 percent; and ten schools were in predominantly Hispanic communities that ranged from 91 to 100 percent Hispanics. Six schools did not respond to this item.

A subsequent question regarding the children's primary language revealed that, although some of the schools had large numbers of Hispanic students, many of those students no longer had Spanish as their primary language. Forty-four of the schools reported that less than 30 percent of their students had Spanish as their primary language; eleven schools reported that 31 to 50 percent of their students had Spanish as their primary language; and seven schools had students with 51 to 80 percent Spanish as their primary language.

SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS AND THEIR SUPPORT STAFF

The survey explored the ethnicity of the media specialists and the Spanish proficiency of the library support staff. Forty-eight of the respondents identified themselves as Anglo, five as Hispanic, and one as Native American. There were eight instances of no response to this item. The lack of Hispanic school library media specialists holding an M.L.S. or state certification has been documented in the literature on numerous occasions and was confirmed by the small Hispanic sample in this study. This demographic information was considered important when analyzing the concerns regarding access to children's literature in Spanish. The Spanish fluency of the personnel responding to the survey is significant when viewed in

the light of the large numbers of primary Spanish-speaking students who are served in many of these centers.

One question asked participants to check all items that referred to the type and number of library staff and if their Spanish fluency was high, moderate, low, or none. The results are reported in Table 1.

TABLE 1.
SPANISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY PROFILE OF LIBRARY PERSONNEL

<i>Personnel</i>	<i>Self-reported Spanish Fluency</i>				
	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>No Response</i>
Librarians (n=62)	5	15	20	12	10
Parents (n=21)	6	4	2	7	2
Part Time (n=8)	1	2	-	5	-
Clerks (n=26)	8	4	4	10	-
Aides (n=6)	-	-	6	-	-

Interestingly, 62 percent of the school library media specialists who answered this question had either low or no proficiency in Spanish, 28 percent had medium, and only 10 percent considered themselves as being highly fluent in Spanish. These figures are significant: more than half of the personnel are unable to adequately communicate with Spanish primary students, thereby impeding equal access to services and library holdings, and impairing their ability to engage in the process of Spanish book selection and in bilingual activities performed in the library.

Further analysis was made to see if librarians were employing other personnel with Spanish language skills to accommodate the needs of non-English-dominant children. Table 2 shows the relationship between the Spanish fluency of media specialists and their support personnel.

In summary, note first that thirty-eight of the fifty-six respondents to this question had no additional support in their libraries. Second, the lack of Spanish fluency in support personnel for librarians with little or no knowledge of Spanish is dramatic. This state of affairs could severely limit access for Spanish-dominant students. The non-Spanish-speaking librarians in this study do not have high Spanish-fluent parent volunteers, employees, clerks, or aides. Four of the twelve librarians with no Spanish used support from parents or employees, yet none of those people was highly fluent in Spanish. Low fluency librarians may have special appreciation for the need for Spanish fluency; four highly fluent Spanish-speaking parents were recruited and two highly fluent clerks

were employed by these librarians. The librarians who reported themselves as being of medium fluency in Spanish tended to work with highly fluent clerks. The highly fluent librarians were too few to demonstrate any kind of a pattern.

TABLE 2.
SPANISH FLUENCY OF SUPPORT PERSONNEL IN LIBRARY MEDIA CENTERS

<i>Media Specialists'</i> <i>Spanish Fluency</i>	<i>Available</i> <i>Support</i> <i>in Library</i>		<i>Parent</i> <i>Volun-</i> <i>teers</i>				<i>Part-</i> <i>time Em-</i> <i>ployees</i>				<i>Clerk</i>				<i>Aide</i>			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>N</i>
None (n=12)	4	8				2				2			2	2				2
Low (n=20)	8	12	4	1	2	1			2		2	2	1	4				2
Medium (n=15)	3	12	2	2	1	2	1				5	2	2	3				
High (n=5)	3	2					1	1	1		1							

Personal and telephone interviews revealed that the reasons that Spanish-fluent media specialists are not found in many school library media centers may be because, as the literature reports, there is no pool of Hispanic librarians to hire. In terms of the support staff, telephone interviews explained that school library media specialists do not hire their clerks and/or aides. Tests for these positions are administered at the district level and hiring is done at the central office or by the site administrator. Spanish-fluent aides are most often placed in classrooms which is where administrators feel the more crucial points for language assistance are needed. In addition, some support staff in library media centers were employed before the school's demographics changed.

One survey question asked school library media specialists to rate their own knowledge of the different Hispanic subgroups as high, average, or low. The purpose of this question was to provide some insight into the breadth of knowledge of the library media specialists regarding the various subgroups which comprise the Hispanic population of this country. Analysis of this item reveals that respondents tend to have higher knowledge about the ethnic groups which populate their own communities. For example, most respondents (n=30) indicated low knowledge of Puerto Ricans. Since this study was conducted mostly in states bordering Mexico, the Puerto Rican population is considerably less than it would be had the study been conducted in New York City.

Table 3 shows the self-reported knowledge about the different ethnic groups that comprise the Hispanic population in this country. It should be noted that each of these groups has produced significant

contributions to literature, art, music, dance, and folklore which have influenced and enriched "American" culture. One might speculate that lack of knowledge of Hispanic subgroups could be a factor influencing the library media specialist's competence to make library acquisitions or assess library holdings. The information obtained through this item suggests the need for further in-service training for librarians and school personnel. A lack of knowledge about Hispanic subgroups results in the tendency to lump them into one stereotypic ethnic group without recognizing their individual characteristics.

TABLE 3.
LIBRARIANS' SELF REPORTED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HISPANIC SUBGROUPS

<i>Subgroups</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>No Response</i>
Mexican American	29	27	4	2
Chicanos	20	32	8	2
Latinos	7	19	27	8
Cubans	8	16	30	8
Central Americans	10	16	30	6
South Americans	6	16	31	9
Puerto Ricans	4	17	38	8
Afro-Hispanics	2	20	31	9
Spanish Americans	7	12	28	10

SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTERS' HOLDINGS AND BUDGET

In the survey of school library media centers included in Appendix A of *Information Power* (AASL & AECT, 1988), the results of a survey (1985-1986) conducted by the Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education showed a range of twenty-three to thirty-eight book titles per student in high service elementary school programs with fewer than 500 students (p. 117) and a range of twenty-five to thirty-five book titles per pupil in high service programs at the middle/junior high school level with fewer than 500 students (p. 119). High service elementary schools with over 500 students report a range of fifteen to twenty-seven books per student, while high service middle/junior high schools with over 500 students report from sixteen to twenty-three book titles per student.

Library holdings of the participating schools in this study ranged from fewer than 500 books (one school) to more than 20,000 books (two schools). The breakdown of book holdings for the other schools is: 5,000 to 8,000 (eleven schools), 8,001 to 11,000 (thirty-one schools); 11,001 to 14,000 (eleven schools); and 14,001 to 20,000 (two schools). Four respondents did not provide this information.

A subsequent question in the survey requested the approximate percentage of library books in Spanish. Nine schools had less than one percent of their book collection in Spanish; twenty-three schools ranged between 1 to 5 percent; six fell in the range of 6 to 10 percent; nineteen schools ranged between 11 to 29 percent; one school reported having between 21 and 30 percent; and one school boasted holding between 31 and 40 percent. Three schools did not respond to this item.

Summarizing, thirty-eight schools (more than half) of the heavily Hispanic populated schools in this study had less than 10 percent of their book holdings in Spanish. Clearly, the Spanish-dominant children in this study are not receiving school library services at the same level as their English-dominant peers.

For example, one elementary school in this study, with an enrollment of 605 students, reported 272 English-dominant and 333 Spanish-dominant students. The library holdings for this school were approximately 12,600 volumes. The Spanish language collection consisted of 630 volumes or 5 percent of their holdings. These figures translate to 11,974 volumes in English, or forty-four English language books per English-dominant student. The books in Spanish for use by the 333 Spanish-dominant students are less than two per student. Another school with 4,000 volumes (10 percent in Spanish) had a student body of 560 students of which 168 had Spanish as their primary language. The number of volumes available for English primary students in this school was at a ratio of 20.6 per user while the books in Spanish for the Spanish-primary child were 5.4 per user.

It is generally accepted that the responsibility of the school library is to provide books for all children—for information and for pleasure reading. If libraries are not providing students with books they can read for information and pleasure, we need to reconsider the mission statement of the school library media center. Children who have rewarding experiences with the books they read will continue to turn to them to acquire knowledge and to seek enjoyment. If children cannot read in the dominant language of the school, does it mean that they should be denied their right to read in their own language?

The annual 1990-1991 budget for materials ranged from \$500 to more than \$7,000. Four schools' budgets were between \$500 and \$1,000; twelve schools spent between \$1,001 and \$2,000; nine schools spent between \$2,001 and \$3,000; eight schools had a budget between \$3,001 and \$4,000; twelve schools were allocated between \$4,001 and 5,000; four schools spent between \$5,001 and \$6,000; four had \$6,001 and \$7,000 budgets; seven had more than \$7,001; and two schools did not respond. The budgeted allowance for Spanish language books, on the average, was substantially below the amount appropriate to

the size of the Spanish-dominant population. Thirty-four of the schools surveyed reported a current budget of less than 10 percent for Spanish language books; ten schools budgeted between 11 and 20 percent; three schools budgeted between 21 and 30 percent; two schools reported 31 and 40 percent; three schools reported 41 to 50 percent; and one school reported 55 percent for Spanish-language books. One school reported that all of its Spanish books purchased in 1990-1991 were purchased by bilingual programs. In other schools, Spanish language materials budgets were augmented by centrally run bilingual departments. Two schools did not respond.

A similar pattern prevailed as to the purchase of Spanish nonprint materials: no purchases (five schools), 1 to 10 percent (thirty-nine schools), 11 to 20 percent (four schools), 75 percent (one school), and no response (eight schools). Once again, one school reported that the bilingual program purchased the nonprint materials. A review of the narrative responses in the survey revealed considerable concern for the lack of Spanish nonprint materials available for students, particularly at the elementary school level.

A comparison was made of the budgetary allocations for books and materials made in terms of the number of Hispanic students in the school. Five schools demonstrated equity in their purchasing of materials in English and Spanish. For example, one school spent \$5 for each student in the school whether the child was Spanish-dominant (requiring Spanish materials) or English-dominant. Thirty-one schools spent more on English-language books for English-dominant students than for Spanish language books for Spanish-dominant students. There were wide variations in these numbers. Examples of the extreme ranges were zero for Spanish versus \$4.90 for English; \$.12 for Spanish versus \$1.55 for English; \$.05 for Spanish versus \$5.71 for English; and \$.03 for Spanish versus \$9.69 for English.

In contrast, other examples show preference for purchasing Spanish-language over English-language materials. Five schools in the study spent more on books in Spanish for primary Spanish children than for English-language books for English-dominant children. Examples of the ranges spent on books in Spanish versus books in English are: \$14.36 for Spanish versus \$5.86 for English; \$11.60 for Spanish versus \$8.84 for English; and \$17.50 for Spanish versus \$6.06 for English. A comparison in some cases was not legitimate due to the limited number of primary Spanish students at the particular site. A needed comment here is that the above comparisons were made using the percentage of primary Spanish speakers in the school and not the percentage of Hispanic children.

Miller and Shontz (1991) report that less local money was spent for books in 1989-90 than the previous year (p. 34). They reported that the median expenditure per pupil in 1988 was \$5.55 while the

median expenditure per pupil in 1990 was \$5.48. The effect of lowering the expenditure per student resulted in the ability of library media specialists to purchase slightly over one-half book per student in the average elementary school and one novel per student at the secondary school level. Clearly, if expenditures per pupil are declining, and book prices rising, holdings of Spanish language materials are unlikely to improve.

THE BOOK SELECTION PROCESS

In further pursuit of determining what access Spanish primary students have to children's literature in Spanish, school library media specialists were asked if their school had conducted a needs assessment to determine the primary language of their users and their reading interests. Nineteen schools responded that they had conducted a needs assessment and forty-one responded "no" to this item. Of the schools who responded "yes", only thirteen described what they were doing. In terms of language preference, all respondents stated that information regarding primary language was handled at the school or district level when students registered for school. Nine respondents stated that their needs assessments were made in an informal fashion in cooperation with bilingual teachers through interviews or questionnaires. Other strategies used to identify the needs of the Spanish-dominant students included collaboration with ESL teachers (two schools); input from students (two schools); and input from the principal and the school's reading specialist (two schools). Identification of needs was additionally made by attending school departmental meetings (one school) and involving parents, students, and teachers in a survey (one school).

In the next question, respondents were asked whether book selection was centralized or at the school level, and to describe the process they followed for the purchase of new titles. Book selection was accomplished at the school level in forty-six of the schools surveyed and centralized in fifteen schools with one school not responding. This survey question did not limit the acquisition process to materials in Spanish but rather included the process of acquiring library holdings in general. The majority of the respondents stated that they acquired their materials by a variety of means, such as teacher recommendations (n=25); student recommendations (n=21); to fulfill curriculum needs (n=10); through reviews in professional journals such as *The School Library Journal* (n=16); *Booklist* (n=12); and other professional journals (n=10). Fifteen respondents mentioned that an important source for identifying books for consideration was the monthly district meeting where librarians reviewed new titles.

The subsequent three questions sought to determine how Spanish materials were selected. Respondents were asked if their school or district had a Spanish materials review committee, what criteria they had for evaluating Spanish-language materials, and how the review committee was selected.

Fifty respondents said "no" to the question asking them if they had a Spanish materials review committee, eleven answered "yes", and one did not respond to this item. In terms of how the review committee was selected, only nine responses were received. The review committee consisted of bilingual teachers (three schools), the library clerk and bilingual teachers (one school), the school's reading specialist (one school), and those who expressed an interest in making book selection (one school). In two instances, the selection committee for Spanish book selection was at the district level, and, in one case, the principal and the advisory board of the school appointed the Spanish-language materials review committee. Finally, the third question asked if the school had guidelines by which Spanish materials were selected. Forty-eight respondents answered "no", thirteen answered "yes", and one respondent did not answer the question. Three schools reported having no formally written criteria, and three schools stated that they used the same selection criteria that they use for English-language materials. In two schools, the bilingual teachers established the criteria, and in one, it was established by the bilingual chairperson. Four different schools reported that their criteria for selection were: (1) relevancy to thematic and individual needs; (2) quality of literature; (3) attractiveness, accuracy, and quality of binding; and (4) that the material not be stereotypic.

Another survey question addressed the cooperative agreements of the school media center with other schools and with the public library and if the agreements included services for Hispanic children. Twenty-three schools reported that they had cooperative agreements with other schools, and eighteen schools stated that they had agreements with local libraries; twenty-two schools did not respond. Additionally, thirty-three schools declared that their agreements, both with other schools and public libraries, included services for Hispanic children.

MEDIA CENTER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Survey respondents were asked to check items regarding students' visits to the media center and activities held there. Table 4 lists the activities and events that are held in the schools surveyed.

TABLE 4
MEDIA CENTER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

<i>Activities</i>		<i>Schools responding "yes"</i>
a.	Children visit the media center on a fixed schedule each week	45
b.	Spanish is available for Spanish dominant students during lesson and book check out	41
c.	In-service is provided by media specialist to school staff on Hispanic literature/history/culture	6
d.	In-service is provided to teaching staff by others than the media specialist	17
e.	Hispanic cultural events are periodically conducted in the media center	36
f.	The media specialist provides assistance to teachers in organizing classroom projects dealing with Hispanic literature/history/culture	38
g.	Special exhibits featuring Hispanic books or artifacts are organized by the library throughout the school year	29
h.	Presentations by bilingual resource speakers	19
i.	Presentations by local Hispanic leaders	21
j.	Readings by local Hispanic writers	12
k.	Storytelling by local Hispanic tellers	22
l.	Hispanic folk art exhibits	14
m.	Performances by local mariachis	18
n.	Performances of Hispanic dances	32
o.	Films about Hispanics or Hispanic topics	26
p.	Videos about Hispanics or Hispanic topics	28
q.	Performances by Hispanic theater groups	12
r.	Puppet shows in Spanish or Spanish/English	8
s.	Video production activities about Hispanics or Hispanic culture	9
t.	Hispanic arts and crafts demonstrations and classes	16

Library programs realized by library media specialists or their assistant(s) were further investigated regarding the language(s) used for these activities. Respondents were asked to check those activities that they performed and whether they were carrying them out using English only, Spanish only, or combining both English and Spanish. Table 5 describes the results of this question on the survey.

Other activities that were mentioned by respondents were district library skills (English only), instructional lab exercises (English only), cassette recordings (Spanish only), and combining both English and Spanish workshops, videos, signs, and directions.

One question asked respondents, What books have you used most successfully with Hispanic children? The responses showed significant variance and reflected different interpretations of the question. First, some librarians thought the question referred to books in any language that were popular with Hispanic students; others interpreted the question as meaning books in Spanish only. Time

and time again, media specialists responded that "children like to read the same books in Spanish that their classmates are reading in English." The overwhelming response of the librarians surveyed favored Joe Hayes's books and the Clifford series by Norman Bredwell. More than 75 percent of the respondents stated that they used Spanish translations of popular books in English. The most often quoted authors were Jose Aruego, Judy Blume, Betsy Byars, Tomie dePaola, Dr. Seuss, Mercer Mayer, Maurice Sendak, Shel Silverstein, and Tomi Ungerer. Spanish titles or authors infrequently were mentioned.

TABLE 5
LANGUAGES IN WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE PERFORMED

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Language(s) Used</i>		
	<i>English Only</i>	<i>Spanish Only</i>	<i>Combining Both Languages</i>
Storytelling	31	3	17
Booktalks	42	1	10
Use of patterned language materials	18	1	10
Poetry readings or recitations	26	2	14
Readalouds	38	4	15
Dramatizations	20	2	7
Singing	17	3	13
Choral readings	17	2	9
Puppet shows	18	1	8

Further research is needed to address this question. Does the fact that the library media specialists in this study are generally not highly fluent speakers of Spanish influence the choice of books in translation over books written originally in Spanish? One might speculate that, if the reviews for the English version of books that have been translated into Spanish are favorable, that the no, low, or medium Spanish-proficiency media specialists would assume the translation is of the same calibre and would be of high interest for the Spanish primary child. "The pros and cons need to be weighed," said some of the librarians that were interviewed by phone; they felt that there were several issues to be considered. On the one hand, the translations are: (1) printed in the United States and are easily obtained, (2) they cost less, (3) they have appropriate cataloging material, and (4) reviews are found in professional publications in English. On the other hand, Spanish translations of books written in English usually depict: (1) the life experiences of Anglo children, (2) lack a Hispanic cultural background, and (3) do not allow Hispanic children to become acquainted with their Hispanic literary heritage.

POSITIVE TRENDS IN HISPANIC CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The first narrative question in the survey was devised to identify what positive trends in Hispanic children's literature were apparent to library media specialists. Three major areas of improvement were reported by the respondents: (1) the quality of books printed outside of the United States, including better illustrations, binding, quality of paper and appropriate linguistic level; (2) the increased number of titles available suitable for target groups with themes more appropriate for each grade level; and (3) more positive Hispanic role models. Other positive trends included the increased availability of books that reflect the Hispanic heritage to which children can relate, an increased number of nonfiction books that tie into thematic units across the curriculum and are written with sensitivity to the needs of Hispanic children, the preservation of Hispanic traditional values, and, finally, the tendency for Hispanic authors to write stories that interest children rather than "preach" at them with didactic messages.

NEGATIVE TRENDS, NEEDS, AND CONCERNS REGARDING ACCESS TO SPANISH CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The last two narrative questions in the survey asked respondents to report what they viewed as negative trends in Hispanic children's literature and to elaborate on their needs and concerns in relation to their library media center. Table 6 synthesizes the responses of the participants for the last two questions in three columns: negative trends, needs, and concerns, but it must be noted that there was a significant number of respondents who did not answer the narrative questions. Twenty-eight participants did not answer the question relating to what they perceived as negative trends in Hispanic children's literature, and sixteen did not respond to the last question which related to the needs and concerns of individual libraries in terms of Hispanic children's literature. Eleven respondents in one case and seven in the other stated that they were not qualified to respond to these questions. Once again, it could be conjectured that the lack of Spanish language fluency of the library media specialists affects their ability to respond to these questions. The four major categories reported by the school library media specialists are: (1) acquisition/selection/collection development; (2) quality; (3) funding; and (4) personnel and education issues which decrease school media centers' access to children's literature in Spanish by Hispanic children.

SUCCESSFUL EVENTS

The cover letter for the survey also asked respondents to share experiences of highly successful events in their library. There were

very few responses to the request, possibly due to the time it took to respond to the rest of the survey.

Among the successful activities held in the school library media center that were submitted, the following appear most noteworthy:

1. *Hispanic Heritage Month*—an all school program which recognized the contributions of Hispanics in art, music, dance, sports, politics, government, and science.
2. *Piñata-Making Workshop*—held in the school library media center on May 5. Students learned how to make and break a *Piñata*.
3. *Christmas Celebration Honoring the Teachers*—PTA prepared Mexican food for a luncheon for the faculty.
4. *Young Author's Writing Festival*—included Hispanic speakers and topics.
5. *Career Day*—Hispanic speakers from various career paths were invited.
6. *Artist-in-Residence Program*—paid by the school district, the artist extended awareness of other cultures and art forms linking to students' own culture.
7. *Bilingual Book Fairs*.
8. *Readers Theater in Spanish*—for elementary children.
9. *Reading Buddies Program*—upper grade elementary students in grades 2-5 were paired with, and read to, children in grades K-1.
10. *Drama Department Presentations*—students presented their plays in the media center.
11. *Parent and Student Evening at the Media Center*—children, their parents, and grandparents shared an evening of traditional stories and songs.
12. *Story-Writing Workshops*—children were taught the basic principles of storytelling, wrote their stories, and the librarian submitted them for publication. The intent of this effort was to develop young Hispanic authors.
13. *Biographies of Famous Hispanics*—were read to the entire school through the school's loudspeaker during Hispanic Recognition Week.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were developed from the findings of the survey:

1. Public school administrators in schools with a considerable number of Hispanic children, many of whom are primarily Spanish speakers, should diligently promote reading in both English and Spanish and champion diversity in their school. They should seek funds to increase the library media center's Spanish language

holdings that ensure that primary Spanish students have equal access to books they can read for pleasure or information. They can nurture their school library media center's access by the Spanish-dominant students by encouraging and providing funds to their library staff to travel and attend local and national conferences dealing with Hispanic children and increase their knowledge of the population they serve. They are encouraged to arrange for in-service training provided by the school district in cultural literacy regarding Hispanics to further access and services for Hispanic children. In addition, they are urged, whenever possible, to hire bilingual library staff and actively recruit Spanish-speaking volunteers to help in the media center. School administrators need to be actively involved in organizing a community task force which brings neighborhood parents and leaders together to advocate diversity and to increase the media center's activities. Finally, they should avoid scheduling Spanish-speaking teacher's planning periods at the same time that students visit the library.

2. School library media specialists, particularly those who have little or no Spanish fluency, need fluent support staff to ensure that primary-Spanish children have equal access to the media center. They should review their holdings in Spanish in relation to their primary-Spanish enrollment and ensure that there are sufficient titles to meet the needs of primary-Spanish students. Whenever possible, they should enroll in Spanish classes to increase their fluency and ability to communicate in Spanish. They would benefit by attending local, state, and national conferences that would expand their knowledge of Hispanic culture and the information needs of Hispanic children. They would benefit by meeting with Spanish-speaking librarians in their district to discuss and review any new publications which would facilitate their selection of books in Spanish. They would profit considerably if they organize a local parent advisory board that would become involved in finding ways of increasing services for Hispanic children and would recruit them as resources for media center programs. Media specialists could develop a newsletter that reports successful events for Hispanic children and invite their parents to participate. Important resources for media specialists are bilingual teachers who can help expand the media center's programs and the sharing of their bilingual program's resources in such ways as: books bought with their funds, and publication of catalogs addressed to bilingual personnel, and reviews and book lists of materials in Spanish. Teachers could supply vendors' catalogs that they gather at bilingual conferences such as NABE (National Association for Bilingual Education).

Bilingual students could be asked to do booktalks for special groups, to be library resource people, and to be leaders in book discussions.

TABLE 6
NEGATIVE TRENDS, NEEDS AND CONCERNS REGARDING HISPANIC CHILDREN'S
LITERATURE AS PERCEIVED BY SCHOOL MEDIA SPECIALISTS

<i>Negative Trends</i>	<i>Needs</i>	<i>Concerns</i>
I. Acquisition/Selection/Collection Development		
	To increase Spanish language materials collection—particularly non-fiction titles (n=16)	The limited size of the Spanish language materials collection (n=2)
	Increased holdings that address the Hispanic children's experience in the U.S. and encourage positive Hispanic role models (n=6)	The materials have no relevancy to urban, Hispanic children (n=3) Lack of Hispanic authors as Hispanic role models (n=2)
	More Spanish language reference materials (n=4)	Lack of good elementary-level Spanish language reference materials (n=4)
Levels of Spanish language reading materials are too high for intended grade levels (n=1)	More elementary large print Spanish language materials (n=5) More Spanish language materials at lower levels for nonliterate, recent immigrants (n=1) More Spanish language materials to supplement curricular themes (n=4)	Not enough variety of Spanish language materials at different reading levels (n=2) Lack of Spanish language materials to supplement curricular themes (n=2)
	More library skills materials and signage in Spanish language (n=1)	Lack of standardization of cataloging for Spanish materials (n=6)
Materials in English/Spanish format are confusing (n=1)	More materials in English/Spanish format (n=2)	Not enough materials in English/Spanish format (n=2) Insufficient reviews and recommendations from reliable sources to facilitate Spanish language materials selection at various grades and performance levels (n=5)

Too many translations of English/Spanish, not enough original Spanish language materials (n=3)

More translations of popular English language titles into Spanish language (n=5)

More non-print Spanish language materials (n=5)

II. Quality

Poor Spanish language translations of books in English (n=4)

Improved physical quality of Spanish language materials (binding, paper, illustrations) (n=2)

Low physical quality of Spanish language materials (binding, paper, illustrations) (n=11)

Poor literary quality of Spanish language materials (n=2)

More quality award-winning Spanish language materials (n=1)

Dialect differences in Spanish language materials (n=3)

Not enough quality award-winning Spanish language materials (n=2)

III. Funding

More funding for Spanish language materials (n=8)

Lack of funding for Spanish language materials (n=2)

High cost of Spanish language materials (n=8)

IV. Personnel and Education Issues Which Decrease School Media Center Access to Children's Literature in Spanish by Hispanic Children

Many school media specialists and library staff that are not Spanish-fluent are being hired to work in schools that have primary Spanish students (n=3)

Improved staff development for school media specialists that serve Spanish-dominant students (n=2)
Spanish language and culture classes to increase cultural awareness (n=2)

A significant number of respondents failed to answer questions #28 (n=28) and #29 (n=16) and claimed they were inadequately qualified to answer any questions regarding children's literature in Spanish

Bilingual education programs: (a) Purchase materials only for use by their students in their classrooms—thus denying access to these materials to bilingual, English-dominant children, and (b) act as a barrier against the children learning to read in English (n=4)

Perceived homogenization of various cultures into the term "Hispanic" (n=1)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to express my gratitude to Sarah Barchas for her guidance and support and to Judi Moreillon for her help in the preparation of this article.

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL LIBRARY CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANS' SURVEY

For purposes of this survey the term *Hispanic* will be used to refer to the large mass of people who are or descend from a Spanish-speaking country.

QUESTIONS 1-4 ARE OPTIONAL

1. Your name _____
2. The name and address of your school _____

3. Would you allow me to follow up on this questionnaire by phone? If yes, what is the phone number and time I can reach you? _____
4. Are you Hispanic? Yes _____ No _____

IN WHAT CITY AND STATE IS YOUR SCHOOL LOCATED? _____

5. How would you rate your knowledge of the following sub-groups of the Hispanic population. Please indicate with a letter value:
 H = High A = Average L = Low

_____ a. Mexican Americans	_____ f. South Americans
_____ b. Chicanos	_____ g. Puerto Ricans
_____ c. Latinos	_____ h. Afro Hispanics
_____ d. Cuban Americans	_____ i. Spanish Americans
_____ e. Central Americans	
6. Number of students in your school _____
7. What grades does your school serve? _____ through _____
8. What is the approximate percentage of Hispanic students in your school?

9. What is the approximate percentage of Hispanics in your community?

10. What is the approximate percentage of students in your school whose primary language is Spanish? _____
11. Description of the personnel in your library (check all items that apply to your library, please)

_____ a. School library media specialist with M.L.S. degree
Spanish fluency High _____ Moderate _____ Low _____ None _____
_____ b. School librarian with state certification
Spanish fluency High _____ Moderate _____ Low _____ None _____

- ☐ c. Library parent volunteers, hours per week ☐
 Spanish fluency High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ None ☐
- ☐ d. Part time librarian M.L.S., hours per week ☐
 Spanish fluency High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ None ☐
- ☐ e. Library clerk, hours per week ☐
 Spanish fluency High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ None ☐
- ☐ f. Library aide, hours per week ☐
 Spanish fluency High ☐ Moderate ☐ Low ☐ None ☐
- ☐ g. Other—Please describe including hours per week they assist you and their Spanish fluency _____

12. What is the approximate number of books in the collection of your library? _____
13. What approximate percentage of your collection does the Spanish language juvenile material represent? _____
14. What is your annual book budget? \$ _____
15. What approximate percentage of your annual overall budget is currently devoted to the purchase of Spanish language books? \$ _____
16. What approximate percentage of your annual budget is devoted to non-print materials in Spanish? _____
17. Has your library/school conducted a needs assessment to determine the language(s) of your users and their reading interests? Yes ☐ No ☐.
 If "yes" please describe what you did. _____

18. What is the process of book selection for purchase of new titles in your school?
- ☐ a. centralized
☐ b. school level
- If your answer is "b", please describe the book selection process _____

19. Do you have a Spanish-language review committee that evaluates materials to determine their appropriateness for inclusion in your collection? Yes ☐ No ☐

20. Does your library have specific criteria for evaluating Spanish-language materials? Yes ☐ No ☐. If yes, would you briefly describe or send me a copy of your criteria, please? _____

21. If the answer to 20 is yes, how is the committee selected and what contingencies are represented? _____

22. Do you have any type of cooperative agreements with

- ☐ a. another school?
☐ b. the local public library or a branch?

If you checked either item above, does the cooperation include services for Hispanic children? Yes ☐ No ☐

LIBRARY ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

23. Please check the items that apply to your program.

- ☐ a. Children visit the library on a fixed schedule each week
- ☐ b. Spanish is available for Spanish-dominant students during lessons and book check out
- ☐ c. Inservice is provided by librarian to school staff on Hispanic literature/history/culture
- ☐ d. Inservice on Hispanic literature/history/culture is provided to teaching staff by others than the librarian
- ☐ e. Hispanic cultural events are periodically conducted in the library
- ☐ f. The librarian provides assistance to teachers in organizing classroom projects dealing with Hispanic literature/history/culture
- ☐ g. Special exhibits featuring Hispanic books or artifacts are organized by the library throughout the school year
- ☐ h. Presentations by bilingual resource speakers
- ☐ i. Presentations by local Hispanic leaders
- ☐ j. Readings by local Hispanic writers
- ☐ k. Storytelling by local Hispanic tellers
- ☐ l. Hispanic folk art exhibits
- ☐ m. Performances by local mariachis
- ☐ n. Performances of Hispanic dances
- ☐ o. Films about Hispanics or Hispanic topics
- ☐ p. Videos about Hispanics or Hispanic topics
- ☐ q. Performances by Hispanic theater groups
- ☐ r. Puppet shows in Spanish or Spanish/English
- ☐ s. Video production activities about Hispanics or Hispanic culture
- ☐ t. Hispanic arts and crafts demonstrations and classes
- ☐ u. Other _____

24. Do you print flyers announcing programs? Yes ☐ No ☐ Are they in English and Spanish? Yes ☐ No ☐

LIBRARY PROGRAMS

25. Below are some activities that are performed in school libraries by the librarian or the children in the school. Please check those that are performed in your library.

	English Only	Spanish Only	Combining both languages
Storytelling			
Booktalks			
Use of patterned language materials			
Poetry readings or recitations			
Readalouds			
Dramatizations			
Singing			
Choral readings			
Puppet shows			
Other			

26. What books have you used most successfully with Hispanic children? Please list (Use the opposite blank page if necessary). _____

27. What trends in Hispanic children's literature do you view as positive?

28. What trends in Hispanic children's literature do you view as negative?

29. What do you feel are your greatest needs and concerns in Hispanic children's literature for your school library? _____

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The Adolescent Quest for Meaning through Multicultural Readings: A Case Study

SANDRA CHAMPION

ABSTRACT

THIS ARTICLE EXAMINES the results of a study of the role the library media program plays in easing the adolescent immigrant's struggle with alienation, assimilation, and literary acculturation. Important factors that influenced students included a student-centered learning environment that values cultural diversity, fosters interpersonal learning, accommodates learning styles, promotes use of emerging technologies, and encourages circulation of all materials including hardware. The most important factor in literary acculturation, however, was the peer group process of meaning making (Vandergrift, 1990a). The study showed that adolescent immigrants will find and make meaning about themselves and their personal experiences by exploring, in their peer group, the journey of the archetypal hero. The study also found that students entered the group discussions as culture bearers, but, within the group over a period of time, changes took place as students noted cultural differences and similarities. Together they interacted as culture makers and ultimately emerged as new culture bearers. Their experiences indicate that: (1) one culture does not produce a typical literature that reflects all of the characteristics of its people; (2) not one book or list of books can represent a culture; and (3) literary acculturation is not transmitting heritage as a package deal or forcing the adoption of the cultural patterns of any single group but a process of personal and social change and choice caused by the individual's interaction with peers in a wide variety of literary experiences.

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INTRODUCTION

The immigrant experience of the 3,006 students at Hialeah High School in Dade County, Florida, is the classic heroic story of the archetypal journey, a modern extended metaphor with each new immigrant's personal myth. Although each of their stories is different, the collective story of the student population reflects numberless similar experiences. Underlying each are common struggles: first, the struggle to know and understand the language of their new country while continuing the process of growing in their home language, and, second, the struggle to know and understand the complexities of the world in which they live while yearning to know and understand themselves. In short, no matter the ethnic origin, the student at Hialeah High School has to wrestle with both an inner and outer world in more than one language and in more than one culture. It was the aim of this study to examine the role the library media program plays in assisting young individuals in their journey and in their quest to acculturate.

Results of this case study show that the library media program plays a vital role in assisting young people in the difficult process of literary acculturation. Major factors that influence students are:

1. A student-centered learning environment that values cultural diversity and fosters interpersonal learning.
2. A focus on similarities and differences in personal belief systems, meaning making, and the human condition rather than a focus on similarities and differences in language, culture, and ethnicity.
3. Respect for personal choice and promotion of self-esteem by arranging all print and nonprint resources in various languages in the same Dewey classification order thus ignoring the establishment of isolated special sections for language minority students.
4. Emerging technologies that: (a) accommodate learning styles, (b) reduce over-reliance on language as the single means of getting information or making meaning, and (c) remove limits of linear modes of learning.
5. A strong literature program that: (a) builds on student interest in personal myth, (b) relates it to the archetypal heroic journey in literature of diverse cultures, and (c) depends on a teaching library media specialist to form partnerships with teachers and students and to provide leadership in facilitating the peer group process of making meaning.

BACKGROUND

Refugees arrive daily in Miami seeking a new life and a quality education. When they enroll in the Dade County School System,

they become a part of the fourth largest system in the nation and the third largest business operation in Florida. They join 304,287 students in the district. Of these students, 227,145 are presently enrolled in various bilingual programs. It costs taxpayers approximately \$80 million a year.¹ There is no federal program that aids the refugee impact on the Dade County Schools. Although the metropolitan government collects the school tax for the school system, it exercises no control over its use. The seven member school board, elected by countywide vote, appoints the district superintendent who has responsibility for administration of the 278 schools in the district. The school district is divided into six regions, each with a region superintendent and administrative staff. The ethnic classification of the district's instructional staff does not yet reflect the district's 304,287 students who are predominantly Hispanic (see Figures 1 & 2).

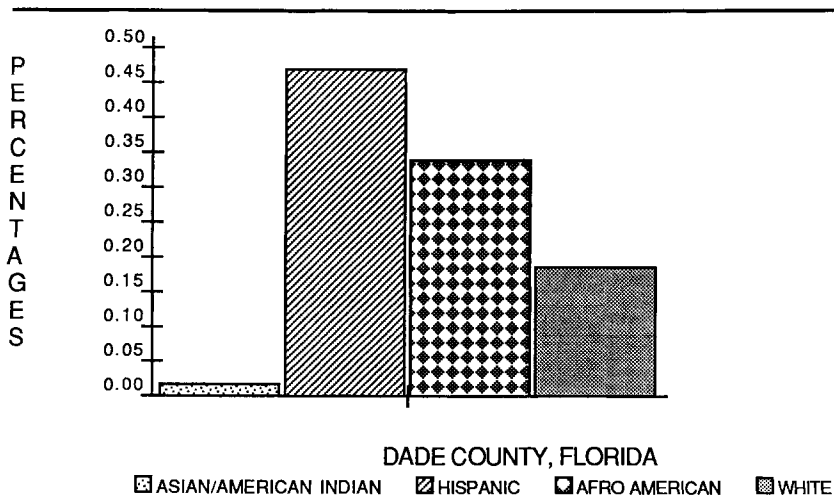


Figure 1. Ethnic composition of student population of Dade County

Many of the new immigrants soon move from Miami to Hialeah, Florida. The city of Hialeah, founded in 1921, began as a flat parcel of sawgrass and scrub bordering the Everglades. It has grown into the second largest city in Dade County with a present, but constantly expanding, population of 188,004. The number of refugees crowding into the area since the Castro regime came into power in Cuba has had an enormous impact on population growth. In 1960, approximately 2,000 Cubans were clustered in the southwest section of Hialeah. When the freedom flights between Cuba and Miami began in 1965, enrollment figures for Cuban refugee students began to show

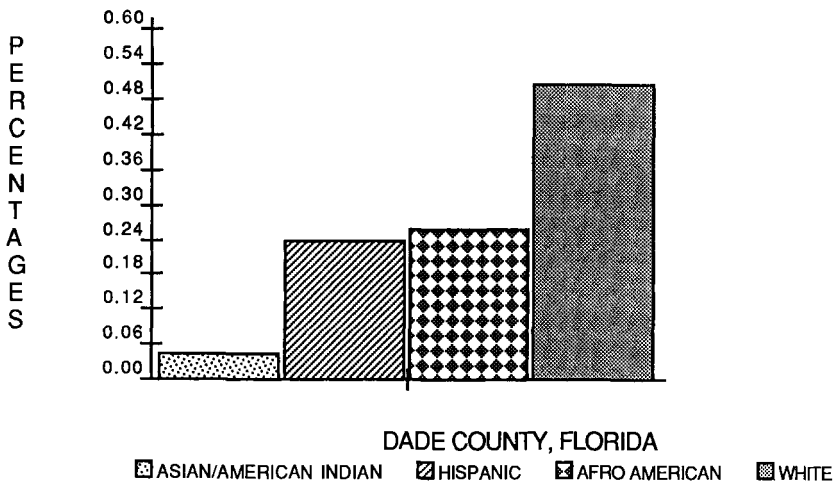


Figure 2. Ethnic composition of instructional staff of Dade County

a steady increase. This was also a district-wide experience, and, at the beginning of the 1972-73 school year, approximately one of every four children in the Dade County Public Schools was from a Spanish-speaking background and the numbers of these students had tripled in less than eight years. Many of these new immigrants settled in Hialeah, and, by 1980, Hispanics represented 75 percent of the city's total population. At the time of this study, Hispanics represented 90.1 percent of the entire population of Hialeah. Accordingly, 42,750 more residents, predominantly Hispanic, have settled in Hialeah in the last decade, which reflects a 22.73 percent growth in population for this lower-middle class community. Since Hialeah has the largest number of industries in Florida, with more than 1,000 factories and over 10,000 businesses, Hialeah employs almost 30 percent of Dade County's manufacturing laborers.

Hialeah High School, one of twenty-nine senior high schools in the Dade County School System, is located in Hialeah, Florida, in the northwestern part of Dade County. Hialeah High School's large sprawling open campus is surrounded by modest family homes, many of which have been converted into small businesses and cottage industries. The school was built in 1954 to accommodate 2,000 students. Presently, Hialeah High School's population of 3,006 students mirrors the demographics of the community. The teaching staff, however, consists of 150 teachers whose ethnic makeup has not changed at the same pace as the student and community population (see Figures 3 & 4).

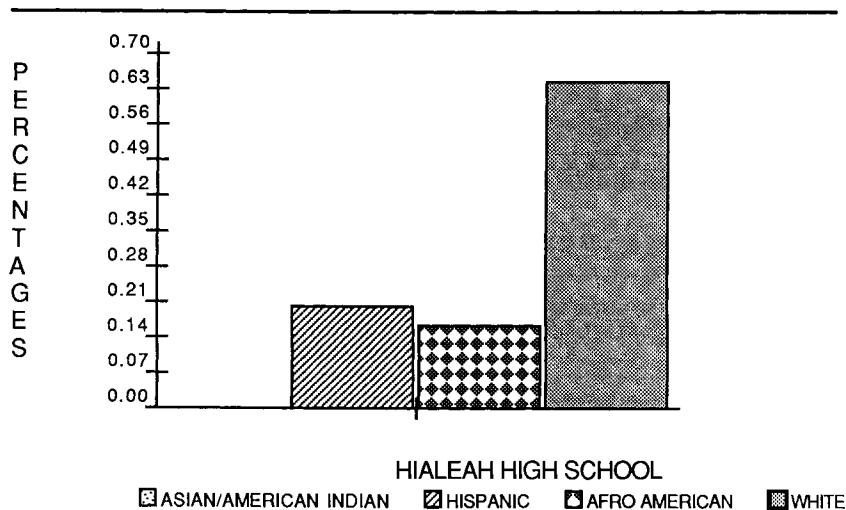


Figure 3. Ethnic composition of instructional staff of Hialeah High School

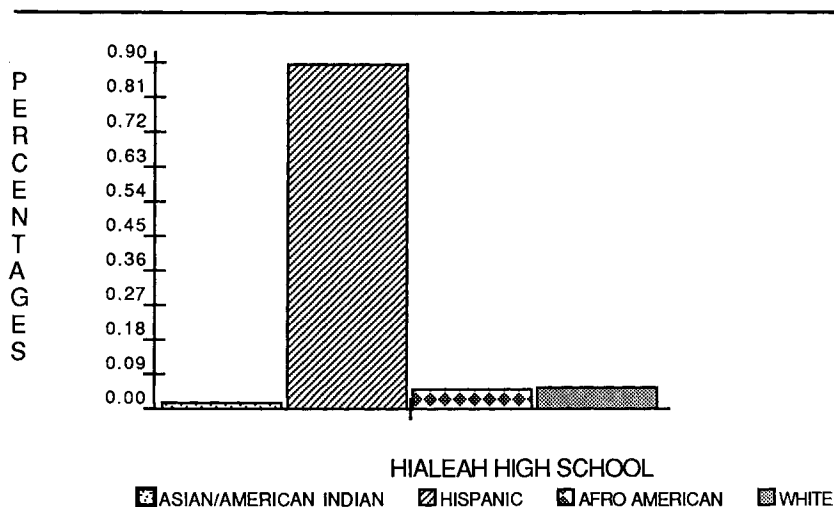


Figure 4. Ethnic composition of student population of Hialeah High School

The targeted site of this study was Hialeah High School's Library Media Center, which accommodates over 200 students an hour for activities such as reading, viewing, listening, browsing, researching, collaborative learning, computing, telecommunicating, producing, creating, and reporting. The Media Center is staffed with two certified media specialists, one library media clerk, one audiovisual specialist,

one television systems technician, and one part-time certified Media Specialist for evening hours. The Media Center is open from 7 A.M. until 9:30 P.M. weekdays. The collection includes 46,035 books, 180 periodicals, 8 newspapers, 7,500 audiovisual materials, and over 500 software programs. In addition to the six terminals that hold *Impact*, Dade County's Public Access Card Catalog on CD-ROM, there are twelve CD-ROM workstations, two telecommunications stations, and approximately thirty-eight public access computers for student use. Every classroom is wired for cable, and instructional programs are distributed throughout the day from the center. Students are encouraged to use the television production studio for presentations. The open access computer area meets a wide variety of needs for students and staff. Hardware and software is provided for both Mac and IBM environments. While most students use word processing programs, others use databases, spreadsheets, simulations, tutorials, and a wide variety of curriculum-related software programs.

Media Services at Hialeah High School are integrated into the total educational program. The Media Specialists attend curriculum council, departmental, and special program meetings and serve on a wide variety of curriculum-related committees. They prepare bibliographies, set up reserve collections, arrange for group presentations, teach information skills, coordinate programs, teach word processing and other computer applications, promote student work and original production, give book talks, provide individual help, plan cooperatively with teachers, provide interlibrary loan, and present in-service workshops on cooperative learning, electronic research strategies, learning styles, reading promotion, and technology application. However, the heart of the center is the literature-based program which was developed originally for students who speak English as a second language but has expanded to the total school population.

THE STUDY

Hialeah High School's faculty and administration recognized an increasing responsibility to meet the needs of immigrants with limited English proficiency who are enrolling daily. Since the majority of the students are from Cuba and Central and South American countries, they speak Spanish as their first language. Spanish is also spoken throughout the community's businesses, churches, and civic organizations. In many homes, Spanish is the only language spoken. Hialeah High has implemented ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and BCC (Bilingual Curriculum Content) programs, but the majority of students are enrolled in regular academic programs where instructional methods are the same today as they were over

thirty years ago. Except for several advanced placement and honors classes, students are heterogeneously placed in regular English classes and score an average of 360 out of a possible 800 on the SAT and 18.1 out of a possible 30 in reading on the ACT. In spite of these low scores, 62 percent go on to college. In the typical classroom setting, teachers are rooted in directive teaching of authorized meaning to the exclusion of all other approaches. Teachers lecture and ask questions. Students guess at what the teacher knows and thinks about the meaning. Knowledge remains a secret until the teacher unveils, through lecture, the chosen literary critical interpretation. Students work within that framework, wrestle with the mystery of meaning, and ignore their own thoughts. Self-esteem crumbles. Efforts toward critical thinking evaporate and the slow insidious killing of joy begins.

In an effort to stop this erosion of joy in reading, the media staff encouraged the cadre² to target the teaching of literature as the focus for school improvement.³ The media center staff provided inservice workshops in reading aloud strategies, adolescent literature, cooperative learning, materials selection, and technology. A predictably favorite feature of the School Improvement Plan was the provision of a substitute for every teacher in the school. On the day of their choice, self-selected teams of teachers were to spend the day in the school media center exploring, inquiring, discovering, and enjoying ways the media center's resources could help students in the process of literary acculturation.

Out of many brainstorming sessions that followed this day, a small team of teachers and the media specialist developed a series of reading projects and strategies around the theme of personal myth and the archetypal hero that have been examined as a part of this study. Two English teachers with four classes each worked with media specialists to present the literature that would launch students into a long-term study of self and the hero in all cultures. Since the other library media programs continued during the literature project, the study looked at students using the library in three different ways: (1) students who were sent to the library on a pass during the school day to seek information in order to complete an assignment designed by the teacher; (2) students who were using the center of their own volition before and after school, during lunch, or in the evening to inquire, discover, explore, or "hang out"; and (3) students who were enrolled in one of eight English classes used in this study.

Data Collection

In examining the role the library media program plays in easing the process of literary acculturation, data were collected through the use of the following:

Interviews

- 1 high school principal
- 1 district bilingual program director
- 1 state legislator
- 1 facilitator for *META*⁴
- 15 media specialists
- 10 teachers
- 50 students

Surveys

- 300 students (Learning Styles Preference Survey)
- 300 students (Media Center Interest/Use Survey)

Documents Examined

- 50 samples of student writing
- 25 samples of student notes
- 100 student reports

Observations of Media Center Use (Four Month Duration)

- Daily observation of students (Approx. 110 per hour)
- Daily observation of teachers (Approx. 40 per day)

Discussants (Archetypal Hero Study)

- 300 students in eight groups

The surveys were in English only because they were administered exclusively to those students who did not need ESOL⁵ or had successfully exited ESOL⁶ programs. However, in the interviews, students were allowed to use either English or Spanish because all the interviews were conducted with students who were using the Media Center. Therefore, they represent a wide range in ability, English language proficiency, native language proficiency, achievement, time lived in the United States, native country, educational experience prior to entering the United States, attitude toward learning, and economic and family status all of which clearly indicated that there is no such thing as a "typical" Hispanic student.

Of the students interviewed in grades ten, eleven, and twelve, 57 percent are from Cuba and the remaining 43 percent of the students represent twenty-seven different countries including the United States. Nineteen percent have arrived in the United States within the last three years, 15 percent have been born in the United States, and the others, representing 66 percent of those interviewed, entered the United States in the early and middle grades.

In determining the role that the total library media program plays in meeting the needs of students in the process of literary acculturation, the following questions were asked:

1. How does the learning environment ease alienation, affect assimilation, and ease the process of literary acculturation?

2. What concerns do adolescents have about differences and similarities in themselves and others?
3. How do students feel about being identified as special and perceived as needing adapted collections and isolated areas for use?
4. How do students who are learning in a second language benefit from technology?
5. What factors should be considered in designing a program to assist young adults in the process of literary acculturation? Can the excavation and authorship of personal myth provide contextual structure for understanding literary myths? Can the use of the archetypal heroic journey in literature from diverse cultures and its relationship to the students' personal myths help students make meaning out of selves, the immigrant experience, and the human condition? How does the media specialist serve the student in the process of discovering joy and meaning in literature?

Although a variety of adults in responsible positions were interviewed for this study, the focus for this article is on data collected from students. Heavy reliance was placed on the daily observations of student responses to the media center's program offerings, student responses in the literature groups, and student responses to the Learning Styles Preference Survey (see Appendix A) and the Media Center Interest/Use Survey (see Appendix B).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Learning Environment

A student-centered learning environment that values cultural diversity and fosters interpersonal learning.

The adolescent, fully engaged in the process of becoming, is tormented by self doubt, and, according to Freud (1935), full of storm and stress. If the adolescent is abruptly flung into a new environment where a language other than the home language is spoken, the normal feelings of alienation are grossly exaggerated. To think that the process of literary acculturation will begin easily or early in the assimilation process, but especially before basic needs (Maslow, 1968, p. 126) are met, is unrealistic. Before students can begin any meaningful interaction with text, they must resolve critical social issues. Intense feelings of alienation in the adolescent immigrant need to be allayed by interaction with a group. Henry Stack Sullivan (1953) contends that the personality is almost entirely the product of interaction with other significant human beings. Seltzer (1989) affirms: "The adolescent dialectic stimulates each young person to search out others in the same condition" (p. 159).

The media center's learning climate is clearly designed by and for students. Students said they instantly knew they were in a special place upon entering the center. Students indicated that they felt wanted in the center and that their languages and cultures were valued. Students particularly enjoyed the informal setting of the center and praised the policies that encouraged group work, peer tutoring, and social conversation. Although only 2 percent of the students surveyed indicated that they needed a quiet area in which to study, virtually all felt that the noise level in the center was conducive to study. One senior who had been using the library daily since he arrived from Nicaragua two and one-half years ago commented that the library was to him, "a home away from home. I found this place my second day in America and I have been hanging out here ever since. I feel good here, safe, and comfortable. All my friends are here." Students recently exiting from the ESOL classes said that, after a short time in the media center, they felt their feelings of fear and insecurity lessen. They noted that, prior to entering the media center, feelings of insecurity were magnified by the strangeness of the English language and many cultural differences. Imagining the vast silent world of print in the English language and then "seeing those rows and rows of books" was, according to one student, "enough to quit school." Asked why he stayed, he responded: "Nobody pushed me to make a fool of myself, to let everybody know I couldn't yet handle all those books. I hung around here with my friends, fooled with all the computers, talked a lot, and found out that I wanted to know more." Another student said that he felt that whatever language he used with his friends in the center was okay, but that he had been yelled at in his classrooms for speaking Spanish. Other students appreciated being able to speak in a language other than English for three reasons:

1. They were under an implied school policy to speak English in all classrooms other than Bilingual Curriculum Content classes.
2. Peer tutoring in their native languages helps them use library materials and equipment skillfully and in their efforts to make meaning.
3. They felt that their ability to speak a language other than English gave them feelings of personal value and self worth. Students appreciated being treated with respect and courtesy.

Of the students surveyed in the learning preference survey, 93 percent indicated their preference for learning through some form of collaboration. They cited the following as positive factors that drew them to return to the center:

1. large congregation of peers;
2. varied and busy activities;

3. noise;
4. laughter and general lack of tension;
5. student assistants in the lab and at the workstations;
6. photographs of fellow students spending time at many different activities in the center;
7. student displays, bulletin boards, photographs;
8. large and popular student message center;
9. student birthday board;
10. reading journals and personal myths on display and cataloged in the district's card catalog;
11. student art work;
12. college corner;
13. financial aid notices;
14. career center;
15. job center with current available local jobs listed;
16. student supplies store with frequent mention of computer discs, and assigned paperbacks on sale;
17. free xeroxing, microfiche printing, and printouts from the various workstations;
18. computers for personal use;
19. videos and videorecorders for circulation;
20. books on audiotape and audiocassette recorders for circulation; and
21. air conditioning.

Concerns Adolescents Have About Themselves and Others

A focus on similarities and differences in personal belief systems, meaning making, and the human condition rather than a focus on similarities and differences in language, culture, and ethnicity.

Students had little interest in discussing cultural, ethnic, and language differences and similarities but were gravely concerned about discussing issues that explored similarities and differences in beliefs concerning the reason for existence, the point of learning, the mystery of the brain, the subjects dictated for study, the range of human emotion, and the quality of life. When students were asked to discuss their immigrant experiences, their descriptions centered on common values and sensitivities. The differences traditionally ascribed to race and ethnicity were missing in their accounts. Beyond the common adolescent preoccupations with self, clothes, hair, members of the opposite sex, music, cars, and parties, students demonstrated an uncanny awareness of the universality of the human condition. They seemed to know intuitively that fear, pain, courage, cowardice, anger, sadness, and joy are shared human experiences. Furthermore, most expressed a desire to understand how to make meaning out of these

experiences. Even those who were not interested in the literature classes on the archetypal hero chose to participate when they considered that literature illuminates the joy and dulls the pain of being human and that making meaning out of heroic journeys could provide insight into their own personal journeys.

Respect for Personal Choice and Promotion of Self-Esteem

Students feel better about themselves when they are not identified as special or perceived as needing adapted collections and isolated areas for use.

Since the goal of the program of English for Speakers of Other Languages is to ensure that students entering Dade County Public School with no ability to understand, speak, read, and write English will be able to communicate and function successfully in their English environment within three years, the media center does not have a special section designated for books in languages other than English. All 5,527 books written in other languages are cataloged and shelved by Dewey classification. When a student searches a topic, all books on that subject in one or more languages will be together along with audiotapes, videotapes, records, filmstrips, computer programs, realia, etc. on that same subject. Interestingly, circulation of foreign language books increased slightly after they were integrated into the collection. However, in spite of the availability of books in other languages, the majority of students prefer to check out books in English. Books in languages other than English are checked out for two main reasons according to students: (1) to satisfy an assignment in a Bilingual Curriculum Content class or Advanced Placement Spanish class, and (2) to please or surprise a parent.

Teachers and students alike expressed appreciation of open and equal access policies regarding use, circulation, and organization of print and nonprint materials.

All students, regardless of their level of proficiency in English, are encouraged to use the center and any materials they choose. Students like the "no limit" policy on the number of books and materials that can be checked out, but one student said that he always checks out more than he can handle. Students are particularly pleased with the policy that allows them to check out video- and audiotapes and companion hardware. Speaking for himself and his friends, one student said: "It's a good feeling to be trusted with expensive equipment, and the tapes help me understand the assignment."

Emerging Technologies

Benefits from emerging technologies are that they, (1) accommodate learning styles, (2) remove limits of linear modes of learning, and (3) reduce over-reliance on language as the single means of getting information or making meaning.

In the complicated process of learning in a second language, it is critical that a wide variety of learning formats be offered to accommodate states, styles, and levels of learning. Students with varying proficiency in English, as well as students learning in their native language of English, approach learning in a preferred style based on many factors including age, educational experience, gender, and cultural background. According to Dunn and Dunn (1978): "We are attempting to educate more children with varying levels of intelligence and diversified cultural backgrounds. These students have had varied emotional and psychological experiences, ranging from overindulgence to child abuse. These disparate youngsters have been exposed to highly stimulating technology and an exciting world in which survival is uppermost in the minds of many of their contemporaries" (p. 2). Accordingly, it is not uncommon for a student entering Hialeah High School from a country where he had no formal schooling, no plumbing, and no electricity, to find himself in front of a color monitor with a full text, sound, and graphics database two or three days into his first formal educational experience. One such student, reflecting on his initial experiences with the media center's wide variety of learning technology, told of how he insisted that his mother, grandparents, and cousins return with him to the library the night of his first day in school so that he could "prove he wasn't dreaming and telling stories about all those machines." Later he disclosed that his first database, *Compton's Multimedia Encyclopedia*, is still the source he consults to begin any assignment. He explained that he used to rely solely on the visual assistance, but that now he uses sound and text with skill and confidence.

Observations show that students followed what seemed to be a natural instinct in selecting an approach to learning that suited their needs. The choice of workstation and work area in the media center gave immediate clues as to sensory modality strengths. Visual learners returned frequently to color screens in the various workstations. Audio learners were at the listening stations, and tactile kinesthetic learners worked in the production area or with computer simulation programs. The majority of students observed were field-sensitive learners who enjoyed working with others to achieve a common goal, and the largest numbers of students were consistently found in groups around an electronic encyclopedia.

Since print and nonprint materials on a subject of interest are arranged by Dewey classification together on the same shelf, students were able to select a book, videocassette, audiocassette, computer software, filmstrip, recording, etc. in order to complete the assignment in the mode that matched their learning style preference. Visual learners, of course, selected the video and viewed it at one of four

viewing stations. In each instance, students were joined by one or more students. Several students admitted that they preferred watching a videotape because they felt "lazy" while several others agreed that the videos helped them understand the subject better.

While only 32 percent of the students who took the learning styles preference inventory expressed a preference for auditory learning, over 80 percent of them checked out one or more books on tape. Students unanimously agreed that listening to the book while following along with the text was helpful. Students listened to the books at one of the five listening stations, in their cars, on the Media Center's circulating portable cassette players, or the students' personal tape player. One girl said: "This is a real time saver. I listened to the book while I did the dishes and cleaned my room. Then I made my boyfriend listen in the car while we drove around."

Students with limited language proficiency found searching at a workstation dedicated to a narrow database far easier than searching manually for a printed article. Students said they could get information quickly with limited language skills and limited information skills. Students who cannot find the correct print encyclopedia volume they need in order to find an assigned topic can quickly type the topic into all databases available in the media center. In virtually all instances, when students had a choice between print and electronic databases, they chose the electronic database where they could be surrounded by others who were searching electronically. For the students who chose to interact with computers and with others using computers, the symbolic language of the computer culture emerged for them to use in communicating and learning. Instead of consulting the teacher, students combined problem-solving ideas and interacted with each other and the computer. The interactive computer environment allowed students to explore, experiment, and compare their results with each other instead of waiting for a teacher to eventually show up with temporary assistance. Although teachers objected initially to the noise surrounding computer areas, they were generally pleased with the results of interactive learning. One teacher said: "It is amazing how much they learn from one another, how much they know that I have never imagined. I am learning from them!" The informal cultural, symbolic, and language exchanges that happen in the media center's open access computer area build support for learning in various modes and unleash hidden potential.

Technology radically changed the library media center environment and learning climate at Hialeah High School. Of the 300 students surveyed, 93 percent said that having computers and

computer software in the media center made a difference to them in their use of the media center. The most popular use of computers was word processing. Since the media staff offers word processing instruction during the first semester of a student's first year at Hialeah High School, almost all students were familiar with the media center's policy that encourages frequent use of personal computers. Students and teachers alike felt that use of word processing increased the chance for improved grades. Teachers unanimously praised the benefits of using word processors and reported that the students who used one, even for the first time, wrote clearer and longer papers. Students quickly learned from one another how to use a wide variety of spelling, grammar, thesauri, and graphic programs to improve their efforts.

The electronic encyclopedias, *Compton's Multimedia Encyclopedia*, *Mammals*, *Information Finder*, and *Grolier's Electronic Encyclopedia*, were the second most frequently used technologies and were in use by groups of five to eight students from 7 A.M. until closing time at 9:30 P.M. When the workstations were too crowded to accommodate another patron, staff offered print alternatives. Without exception, students preferred to wait rather than use the print resource. When asked why they made that choice, most students said that they found the information they needed faster and more easily on the electronic encyclopedias, and that they depended on the graphics to help them understand their topic. Of course, the luxury of printing full-text articles from all of the encyclopedias was praised by all the students who were questioned.

Other electronic databases, such as *Infotrac*, *Tom*, *Magazine Article Summaries*, *Newsbank*, *SIRS*, *Shakespeare*, *Choices*, *Peterson's Guide*, and *PC Globe*, were extremely popular. Students were also drawn to the workstation dedicated to *Languages of the World*, a CD-ROM multilingual dictionary database containing eighteen dictionaries in twelve languages. Interactive videodisc programs which are in both Spanish and English, such as *Health: Aids* and *The Louvre*, are booted at 7 A.M. and attract small groups of browsers throughout the day. Surprisingly, very few teachers use or even notice these workstations.

Telecommunications workstations provide access to: *Learning Link*, an online catalog of the film and video collection of the Dade County Schools and the print collection at Miami Public Library, *ERIC*, *Prodigy*, *CompuServe*, and various student bulletin boards, including one developed by the district's computer education department. Language development is encouraged as students send and receive messages from one location to another by use of local bulletin boards. Second, databases are a catalyst for students in their efforts to become more responsible for their own learning.

A Strong Literature Program

A program that focuses on student interest in personal myth and relates it to the archetypal heroic journey in literature of diverse cultures. A teaching library media specialist to form partnerships with teachers and students and to provide leadership in facilitating the peer group process.

In an effort to create joy and build self-esteem through personal and collaborative meaning making, the literature program focused on personal myth and the archetypal hero. Since the fundamental target of the literature program explored in this study valued the reader first and the text second, personal myths were written and discussed first. Next, the study looked at the group process of making meaning of personal myth, of the archetypal hero in poetry and then in novels. Finally, it looked at connections among works in the hero genre.

Using Vandergrift's (1990) theoretical model which "represents an engagement with literature in both a personal and social context" (p. 21), students worked in groups to make meaning out of a literary text using an adult intermediary. The adolescent is in an accelerated stage of becoming and longs to make meaning out of the world. Talking about self is a priority. The goal of the program is to help students understand themselves and others, help them absorb cultures, and gain skill in the subtleties of the English language. Indications were that the process of meaning making was slightly eased by narrowing the broad context of all possibilities in literature to a structured context of the archetypal hero. Students reported that the use of personal myth and the archetypal hero helped them face and understand the fact that people from all cultures had suffered and overcome many obstacles before they experienced personal transformation and, finally, fulfillment or peace. One student said, "I have felt so alone. I thought I was the only one with problems, but when I read the line 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world' (Brooks, 1938, p. 129) spoken by that old man, Ulysses, I felt I had a better shot than he did. Then when we talked about our personal journeys to a new world and I felt we were all in the same boat with wild opportunities, I suddenly felt full of hope." Other students had stories that indicated they had made powerful connections with the hero and his quest. A student said that, through reading the various haikus and other short poems from around the world, he had come to understand that "human beings have always been full of struggle and turbulence, that people have all, at one time or another, felt insignificant, insecure, and afraid." In informal conversations, students who were feeling down or frustrated were told by others to "slay the dragon." Within the groups, it became common

knowledge that: "We all have had to face seemingly insurmountable obstacles." An exploration of the other side of fear and impotence encouraged students to look at personal sources of strength, at the bravery of someone the student knows, perhaps even self.

As students shared meaning in groups by reading short heroic poems and comparing them to their personal myths, they came to see that the basic heroic pattern in all their lives, regardless of cultural background, reduces itself to a monomyth, what Dorothy Norman (1969) describes as the most essential struggle within ourselves (p. 12). The personal myth became a connection from cultural diversity to cultural unity. In addition, the journeys dramatized the singular event of arrival at Hialeah High School where students are not treated as members of an isolated ethnic group but as valued and celebrated members of a richly diverse family. Jung (1964) sees the journey of the hero as dramatizing the human being's inner development toward maturity and psychological wholeness. The only real adventure, according to Jung, is the exploration of our own unconscious and the ultimate goal of this search is to form a harmonious and balanced relationship to self (p. 168). The heroic poem or literary piece serves as the pathway to understanding self. According to George Abbe, the best poetry has been written from subconscious sources under compulsion (Parker, 1969, p. 157). Therefore, the bond between the poet and the reader is strengthened as the group explores the essence of each one. Reik (1948) points out that the aim of the writer is to give a picture of the inner world, the underground of the soul, and that the aim of Freud and subsequent analysts is to investigate the soul and to act as a guide in the labyrinth of the inner world (p. 101). Bringing a heroic poem into the group for meaning making offered limitless opportunities and had a positive effect on students.

Introduction to the archetypal hero began with an oral reading of the great epic of early Spanish literature *Poem of El Cid* (Resnick, 1962) and a discussion afterward. In all the discussions, students wanted to explore the moving scene toward the beginning of the poem when the Cid, banished from Castile by King Alfonso VI, leaves his wife and two daughters. One student remarked that the line "I have loved you as my own soul, but now you see that we must part while we both live; I must go and you must stay behind" (p. 12), reminded him of the Bette Midler song, "Only in Miami Is Cuba So Far Away." Students were encouraged to discuss their departure from their home country and to discuss problems they encountered and how they overcame them. They were then challenged to find a pattern in the stories. They quickly determined that, although each of their stories was different, they indeed followed a similar pattern. At this time, the archetype of the hero and the journey is introduced

in two simple graphics entitled “The Outward Journey” and “The Inward Journey” adapted from Joseph Campbell’s work (1949) (see Figures 5 & 6). In the outward journey, the hero departs in response to a call to adventure. During the initiation stage, the dragon appears in the form of trials, tests, and sacrifices. The threatening dragon can be overcome but only through physical or spiritual deeds, often supernatural. After the dragon is slain, a transformation of consciousness occurs as the hero returns. The journey inward involves the same elements, but the hero is living in a realm of constraint of unfulfilled desire, conflict, and chaos long before the call. Sometimes, due to this constraint, it takes a long time to answer the call, if at all. The paralyzing inner dragons must be killed during the initiation. Once the dragons are slain, there is a transformation of consciousness and the hero returns—this time to the realm of freedom which we know as peace, fulfillment, centering, and self actualization.

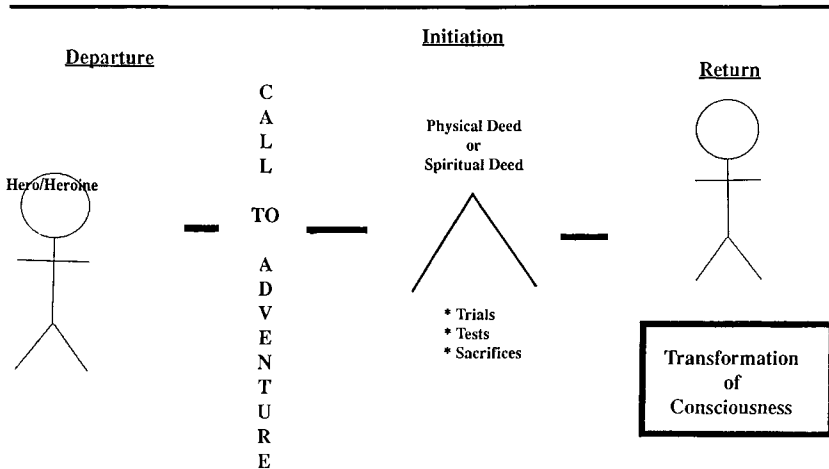


Figure 5. The journey outward

When students read and discussed *El Cid*, some were able to symbolically experience the pain that others had said they had experienced in reality. In an organized sequence of symbolic experiences, each group member’s response enriched the insight into the personal world of others. Often, due to both limited English proficiency and deep personal feeling, the students could not express emotion. The poem, however, afforded a way to express deep feeling in a socially acceptable form. When students understood the poet’s portrayal of the psychic life of a person within the poem, the bond

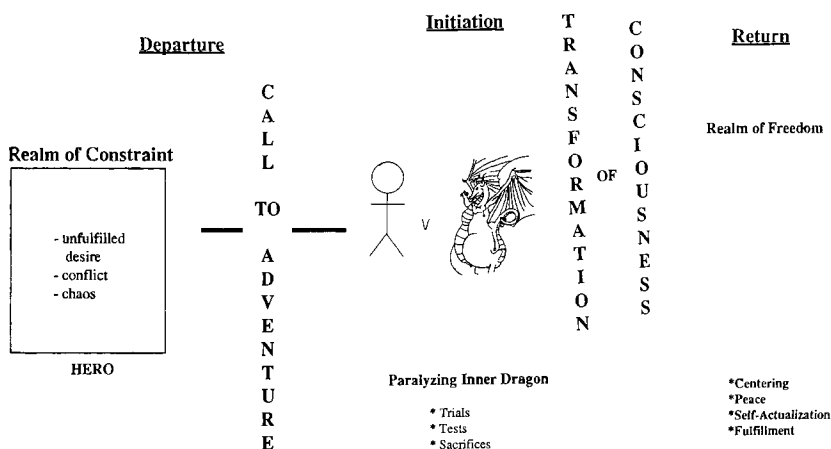


Figure 6. The journey inward

between the poem and the reader formed. The discussion of the poem, therefore, became more than a verbal exchange and the text being considered became more than a verbal message; each transcended structure to become a means to understand, enrich, and soothe the human condition. Wordsworth has defined poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth, 1982, p. 797). Often the student cannot express feelings and cannot use concrete words in the struggle to self disclose. The poet's words, powerful in their design and impact, evoked strong emotional responses in the students. Connotations and symbolic extensions of meaning became inseparable from the work so that its consideration stimulated the group and expanded the meaning.

Students rated Emily Dickinson and Maya Angelou as their favorite poets. They pointed out that Emily Dickinson's imagery suggests the pain of the inward journey and many found symbolic relief in the poem, "After Great Pain" through vicariously experiencing "First—Chill—then Stupor—then the letting go" (Dickinson, 1962, p. 73). When asked to comment on memorable lines, students frequently alluded to the lines,

"Alone, all alone
Nobody, but nobody
Can make it out here alone" (Angelou, 1975, p. 18)

Although the awareness, acceptance, and expressions of feelings are crucial for personal and group meaning making, many students had difficulty in clearly verbalizing these feelings. One student later shared

that, upon entering the group, she felt unique in her own despair and that she alone had fears that were unspeakable. She disclosed that she felt deep concern about her sense of self worth and her sense of relatedness. Others shared similar feelings. However, students unanimously agreed that, when secrets were shared, they realized their secrets were similar to others after all, and this understanding provided a link or a connection to the group and a possibility for universally connecting with mankind. A frequent comment made by students was that the group discussion of the different heroes and their problems gave them hope.

The transition from poetry to prose was mitigated by keeping the focus on the reader and the group interaction with the text. Major themes that students chose to explore as they emerged from discussion of the heroic journeys were: basic isolation, alienation, the recognition of one's mortality, consequences of personal choices, the capriciousness of existence, and man's fallibility.

What emerged from all the group discussions was an attitude toward mankind, toward the human condition, and toward hopefulness. Students agreed that the literature discussions helped them develop a philosophy that enabled them to see themselves from another perspective. Furthermore, they said the discussions gave them an arsenal of strategies to deal with problems and a strong desire to slay their own dragons. The interpersonal exchanges encouraged students to explore feeling, to expand their range of understanding, to discover patterns, and, for a few, to feel some fulfillment. At the least, students felt meaning making of themselves and their immigrant experience through poetry. As Frost has written: "poetry ends in a clarification of life—not necessarily a great clarification, but a momentary stay against confusion" (Leedy, 1969, p. 70).

SUMMARY

Students entered the group discussions as culture bearers, but within the group, over a period of time, changes began as students noted cultural differences and similarities. Together they interacted as culture makers and ultimately emerged as bearers of their own group culture. Their experiences indicate that: (1) no one culture produces a typical literature that reflects all of the characteristics of its people; (2) that no one book or list of books can represent a culture; and (3) that literary acculturation is not transmitting heritage as a package deal or forcing the adoption of the cultural patterns of any single group, but a process of personal and social change and choice caused by the individual's interaction with peers in a wide variety of literary experiences.

In summary, the features of the media program that assist young adults in the process of literary acculturation are:

1. A learning environment that:
 - centers on the needs of the young adult;
 - provides safety, comfort, and love;
 - values cultural diversity;
 - fosters interpersonal learning;
 - encourages learning in more than one language;
 - provides a wide variety of equal and open access activities for reading, listening, browsing, researching, collaborating, computing, telecommunicating, creating, producing, and reporting;
 - integrates all print and nonprint materials within one collection with no special sections isolated for language minority students;
 - values students individually, not as members of a group;
 - encourages oral development of language through cooperative use of multimedia resources.
2. A strong literature program that:
 - relates to students' personal experiences;
 - relates to students' interests;
 - encourages personal and collaborative meaning making in peer group discussions;
 - provides a broad contextual structure by using the archetypal journey in literature from diverse cultures;
 - targets the media specialist as a teacher and facilitator in partnership with the classroom teacher;
 - relates writing and speaking activities to literature; and
 - produces individual and group myths.
3. Technology that:
 - accommodates learning styles of visual, auditory, and tactile-kinesthetic learners;
 - encourages cooperative learning;
 - promotes inquiry;
 - promotes exploratory learning;
 - fosters creativity;
 - removes limits of linear learning modes;
 - increases productivity;
 - builds self-esteem;
 - allows students to be producers of knowledge;
 - matches learning experiences to students' preferred learning style;
 - enables interactive problem solving; and

- provides symbolic communication that is not dependent on any formal language.

The result is a new young culture-bearing group of seasoned, enthusiastic, and confident travelers who love the journey and will continue to make meaning as they read literature of their choice from widely diverse cultures.

APPENDIX A

LEARNING STYLES PREFERENCE SURVEY

PART I STUDENT PROFILE

Name _____
 Grade _____ ID# _____ Gender _____
 _____ Asian American _____ Afro-American _____ White _____ Hispanic

1. Where were you born? _____
2. How long have you been living in the United States? _____
3. What is your native language? _____
4. What language do you speak most frequently at home? _____
5. What language do you most frequently speak at school? _____
6. Approximately, how frequently do you speak English? _____
 _____ All the time _____ More than 50% of the time
 _____ Less than 50% of the time _____ Less than 10% of the time
7. What language do you speak best? _____
8. How long have you lived in Hialeah? _____
9. How many schools have you attended? _____
10. What, if any, newspaper do you read? _____

PART II LEARNING STYLES PREFERENCE

When I go to the media center,

1. I look for my friends.
 _____ always _____ sometimes _____ never
2. I look for an empty private study carrel.
 _____ always _____ sometimes _____ never
3. I look and walk around before I settle down.
 _____ always _____ sometimes _____ never
4. I look for an empty lounge chair.
 _____ always _____ sometimes _____ never
5. I look for an available computer.
 _____ always _____ sometimes _____ never

When I have an assignment to work on in the media center,

6. I ask for help immediately.
 _____ always _____ sometimes _____ never
7. I read the assignment carefully and then ask for help.
 _____ always _____ sometimes _____ never
8. I figure out how to get the information I need without help.
 _____ always _____ sometimes _____ never

9. I decide to do it later.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
10. I decide not to do it all.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never

In order for me to understand an assignment,

11. I need to have written instructions.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
12. I need to have oral instructions.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
13. I need to have both written and oral instructions.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
14. I need to see an example of a completed assignment.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never

When I am studying,

15. I prefer to work alone.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
16. I prefer to work with a tutor.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
17. I prefer to work with friends.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
18. I prefer absolute quiet.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
19. I prefer some background noise such as music.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
20. I prefer lots of background noise such as music and television.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
21. I prefer to eat as I read.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
22. I prefer to drink as I read.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
23. I prefer text in my native language.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
24. I prefer to sit in a comfortable lounge chair.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
25. I prefer to stretch out on the floor.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
26. I prefer bright lighting.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
27. I prefer soft lighting.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never

When I need information,

28. I prefer to find it at a computer workstation.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
29. I prefer to find it in a book.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
30. I prefer to obtain it from a teacher.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
31. I prefer to obtain it from a media specialist.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
32. I prefer to obtain it from another student.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
33. I prefer to obtain it from a videotape.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
34. I prefer to obtain it from an audiotape.
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
35. Of the following choices, please check the one you prefer:
- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ___ an electronic encyclopedia | ___ information from a friend |
| ___ information from a computer | ___ a print encyclopedia |
| ___ paperback novel | ___ information from a book |
| ___ novel in English | ___ hardback novel |
| ___ information from television | ___ novel in Spanish |
| ___ novel on a videotape | ___ novel on audiotape |

Please list the things you like most about your media center:

Please list the things you do not like about the media center:

Please let us know what would you like to see in the media center that you think would make learning easier for you.

APPENDIX B

MEDIA CENTER INTEREST/USE SURVEY

PART I STUDENT PROFILE

Name _____
 Grade _____ ID# _____ Gender _____
 ___ Asian American ___ Afro-American ___ White ___ Hispanic

1. Where were you born? _____
2. How long have you been living in the United States? _____
3. What is your native language? _____
4. What language do you speak most frequently at home? _____
5. What language do you most frequently speak at school? _____
6. Approximately, how frequently do you speak English? _____
 ___ all the time ___ more than 50% of the time
 ___ less than 50% of the time ___ less than 10% of the time
7. What language do you speak best? _____
8. How long have you lived in Hialeah? _____
9. How many schools have you attended? _____
10. What, if any, newspaper do you read? _____

PART II INTEREST/USE

What do you think of your media center? Is it an interesting place with a wide variety of information and things to do? Do you feel welcome in the media center? The media staff needs to know your answers to these and other questions so they can design an even better program especially for you. Thank you for answering each of the following questions carefully.

1. How many times during the week do you come to the media center?
 ___ every day
 ___ once a week
 ___ three to four times
 ___ less than once a week
 ___ never
2. Please check the reasons why you usually come to the media center:

___ research	___ read books
___ check out/return books	___ view videotape
___ use computers	___ listen to audiotape
___ meet friends	___ telecommunicate
___ quick information	___ read magazines

3. Does the media center have the kind of books you read for pleasure?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
4. Are materials current and appropriate for your needs?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
5. Are the books you need available?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
6. Are the materials adequate for your research and term paper needs?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
7. Are materials easy to locate?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
8. Did you attend an orientation class to introduce you to the media center?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
9. Can you get help learning how to find and use the media center's materials?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
10. Is service fast and friendly?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
11. From whom do you usually get help in the media center?
☐ media specialists ☐ library/media clerks
☐ teachers ☐ friends
12. Are you satisfied with the help you receive in the media center?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
13. Are you able to locate materials easily on your subject in more than one language and in more than one format?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
14. Do you speak more than one language when you are in the media center?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
15. Is the atmosphere in the media center warm and friendly?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
16. Do you like spending time in the media center?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
17. Do you enjoy reading?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
18. Do you experience problems when you read in your native language?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
19. Do you experience problems when you read in a second language?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never
20. Do you wish that the media center had more books in your native language?
☐ always ☐ sometimes ☐ never

21. Do you check out books written in Spanish?
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
22. What is the main reason you check out books written in Spanish?
 ___ to read for pleasure
 ___ to complete an assignment
 ___ to share reading with brothers and/or sisters
 ___ to share reading with parents
 ___ to better understand the subject matter of the book
23. Do you use the computers in the media center?
 ___ always ___ sometimes ___ never
24. What is the main reason you use a computer?
 ___ word processing ___ tutorial
 ___ spreadsheet ___ exploration
 ___ database ___ fun
 ___ information retrieval ___ graphics
25. Of the following choices, please check the subjects you prefer to read about:
- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------|-------------|
| ___ Biography | ___ Adventure | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Problems | ___ Fantasy | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ History | ___ Humor | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Mystery | ___ Survival | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Sports | ___ Teenage | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ War | ___ issues | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Young | ___ True | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Adults | ___ Crime | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Psycho- | ___ New Age | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ logical | ___ Medical | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Love | ___ Science | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Murder | ___ Future | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Witchcraft | ___ Animals | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Frontier | ___ Tall tales | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Life | ___ Indians | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Vampires | ___ Music | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Pirates | ___ Aliens | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Detectives | ___ Young | ___ Both | ___ Neither |
| ___ Suspense | ___ love | | |

NOTES

- ¹ Office of the Budget, Dade County Schools, Miami, Florida.
- ² The cadre consists of teachers, parents, students, and administrators who serve as governing members of The School Based Management/Shared Decision Making Team. Hialeah High School joined the Pilot II Program in 1988.
- ³ Each school in Dade County, Florida, is required to develop a School Improvement Plan for Project Excellence.
- ⁴ (META) Multicultural Education, Training, and Advocacy, Inc. has a court ordered agreement with the Florida Department of Education to guarantee development of a District Plan for Limited English Proficient Students that complies with the consent decree. Section 23.058 *Florida Statutes* and Rule 6a-0905 FAC.
- ⁵ (ESOL) English for Speakers of Other Languages includes instruction in speaking, listening to, reading, and writing English in an instructional program appropriate to the proficiency level of the students.
- ⁶ ESOL Program requires students to demonstrate independence in reading, speaking, and writing English before qualifying for placement in mainstream English classes.

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Native American Literature for Young People: A Survey of Collection Development Methods in Public Libraries

RENEE TJOUMAS

ABSTRACT

AMERICAN SOCIETY IS COMPOSED of numerous ethnic and linguistic groups; therefore, librarians have the obligation to develop collections that relate and celebrate this cultural diversity. This study is a preliminary examination of collection development practices, criteria, and sources employed in acquiring Native American literature for children and adolescents. The institutional environment selected for this investigation is the public library outside the reservation context. In exploring this topic, the organization of this article consists of four segments: (1) literature survey; (2) research methodology and data collection; (3) analysis and interpretation; and (4) recommendations and conclusions.

INTRODUCTION

The American cultural tapestry is composed of a rich weave of numerous ethnic heritages and linguistic groups. The librarian's professional obligation is to develop balanced collections to support culturally pluralistic programs which reflect this diversity. Therefore, one of the most challenging responsibilities for library personnel is the selection of appropriate resources to meet the educational and recreational needs of children and adolescents. Exposure to such materials fosters in young people a positive regard for individual and group differences which, in turn, enhances the communication links among members of our multicultural society.

A carefully constructed collection of Native American literature can function on a variety of levels. For Indian youth, this literature could assist them in becoming aware of their own heritage and the unique contributions of Indian people to the world at large. On the other hand, these materials could open an aperture of understanding for non-Indian patrons to respect the rights of American Indians. These resources could also facilitate the work of librarians in formulating innovative outreach programs and services (Kuipers, 1991, pp. 3-4).

The purpose of this article is to provide a preliminary strategy for determining to what degree public librarians outside of the reservation context are actively engaged in collecting Native American literature for young patrons. A second objective is to identify the criteria and resources librarians use in selecting these materials. For clarification, the designations Native American and American Indian will be used interchangeably throughout the text, and they are employed here to include Eskimo and Aleut populations. The structure of this article consists of four segments: (1) literature survey; (2) research methodology and data collection; (3) analysis and interpretation; and (4) recommendations and conclusions.

LITERATURE SURVEY

An examination of the professional literature revealed two significant themes. The first topic pertained to library services specifically designed to meet the needs of Native American patrons. Embedded in the context of these publications, information was located on public library programs and, to a lesser extent, collection development issues. The second subject identified in these writings concerned Native American literature for young patrons. A number of these publications reflected the biases and stereotypes often contained in these materials. In other publications, these concerns and issues were translated into a set of criteria for evaluation and/or selection.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Charles T. Townley (1978) described the role of libraries in the lives of American Indians as "inconsequential" until the mid-twentieth century (p. 142). At that point in time, the concept of self-determination, which emerged from the Native American community, was finally accepted by federal policymakers. As American Indians assumed maximum participation in managing their communities, the need for information sources to assist them in decision-making processes was recognized. Coupled with this trend, library professionals had become increasingly concerned with widening their

service base to a broader audience. These factors stimulated an innovative phase in American Indian library services during the period 1957 through 1973 in all types of information environments including the public library outside the reservation setting.

June Smeck Smith (1971) conducted a study, which was implemented during this first phase of development, to ascertain the state of library services for Indian patrons. Letters of inquiry were sent to a variety of institutions and included: (1) education agencies and state libraries in states with large Indian populations; (2) urban libraries where Indian communities were located; (3) colleges and schools with a sizable ratio of Indian student enrollments; and (4) the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs. An analysis of the collected data revealed that "library service to Indians, whether public, school or academic, is generally an integral part of the library service being provided for students or the general public" (p. 228).

Smith proceeded to discuss the developments within each type of library environment. In terms of public or community libraries, she commented on a variety of projects designed specifically to expand services to reservation areas and identified a range of problems encountered in implementing these programs. Among the difficulties enumerated were the natural suspicions and shyness of the Indian community, linguistic barriers, and patrons' diverse literacy levels. These factors, according to the author, could be counteracted by tact and a search for the appropriate materials.

In the urban environment, Native Americans often encountered cultural confusion and a sense of displacement when separated from their tribal communities which often resulted in making them invisible. These factors made it especially difficult for public librarians to reach this user group. Among the programs described by the author were:

1. The St. Paul Public Library's assistance to the local American Indian Center in developing their own library.
2. The Cleveland Public Library's use of LSCA Title I funds for a program, coordinated by an Indian staff member, to develop relevant services to Native Americans and to make non-Indians more aware of the problems confronted by Indians residing in the area.
3. The Chicago Public Library's work with that city's American Indian Center to provide services and special programs.
4. The Sioux City Public Library's promotion of an interstate project involving Iowa and Nebraska designed to facilitate the growth of public library services in both urban and rural areas. Resources

collected for this program emphasized Indian culture and history (Smith, 1971, pp. 232-33).

In another segment of her article, Smith addressed a variety of selection issues. The author directly showed the need for accurate materials for supporting service activities for both Indian and non-Indian users. Three suggestions were offered to library professionals to facilitate the development of these resources. First, librarians were encouraged to pressure trade and other publishers to produce valid materials. Second, the reading of *Akwesasne Notes*, a Mohawk publication, was recommended for obtaining current information about the Indian world. Third, regarding materials for and about Native Americans, Smith advocated the preservation of the oral literature, the publication of resources in indigenous languages, and the procurement of collections for Indian users which were relevant and meaningful to their reality of existence.

The author alerted readers that guidelines for evaluating Indian materials needed to be formulated but cited two publications as excellent sources for assessing materials for young people. Compiled by Native Americans, these standards appeared in *Textbooks and the American Indian* and *American Indians: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Library Resources*. The evaluative criteria established in the latter source were the basis for a statement submitted in 1971 by the Subcommittee on Indian Materials for approval to the American Library Association's (ALA) Adult Services Division. Smith quoted these guidelines in her article and they are duplicated here because of their relevancy to the focus of this study.

GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION OF INDIAN MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

Truth and art are two criteria of evaluation which can be applied to all types of material. Truth includes accurate sources and treatment of material and qualified authorship. Art is concerned with the quality of presentation—creative power, sincerity, originality and style. Although both of these criteria are embodied in the guidelines listed below, greater emphasis is given to truth because of the misrepresentation of the American Indian in much of the materials existing today.

The first three guidelines are basic principles. The additional guidelines reinforce the basic ones. It is hoped that the following statement will be valuable and useful to publishers and producers of adult materials as well as to librarians working with adults.

BASIC

1. Is the image of the Indian one of a real human being, with strengths and weaknesses, acting in response to his own nature and his own times? If material is fictional, are the

characters realistically developed? Are situations true or possibly true to Indian ways of life?

2. Does the material present both sides of the event, issue, problem, or other concern? Is comparable information presented more effectively in other material?
3. Are the contributions of American Indian culture to Western civilization given rightful and accurate representation and is this culture evaluated in terms of its own values and attitudes rather than in terms of those of another culture?

ADDITIONAL

1. What are the author's or producer's qualifications to write or produce material dealing with American Indians?
2. Does the material contain factual errors or misleading information?
3. Does the material perpetuate stereotypes or myths about the American Indian? Does the material show an obvious or subtle bias?
4. Do illustrations authentically depict Indian ways of life?
5. How might the material affect an Indian person's image of himself?
6. Would the material help an Indian identify with and be proud of his heritage?
7. Does the material express Indian values and might it help an American Indian to reconcile his own values with conflicting ones?
8. Does the material present a positive or negative image of the American Indian and how might the material affect the non-Indian's image of Indian people?
9. Are loaded words (i.e. buck, squaw, redskin, etc.) used in such a way as to be needlessly offensive, insensitive, or inappropriate?
10. Does the material contain much of value but require additional information to make it more relevant or useful? (Library Services Institute for Minnesota Indians, 1970, pp. iv-v)

Townley (1978) marked the year 1973 as the point of closure for the first phase of Indian library development. A coinciding event which occurred that year was the publication of a joint policy statement by the National Indian Education Association and ALA titled, "Goals for Indian Library and Information Service." One of the goals stipulated the acquisition of library resources in the following terms:

Goal—Materials which meet informational and educational needs and which present a bi-cultural view of history and culture, must be provided in appropriate formats, quality, and quantity to meet current and future needs. The library should produce its own materials, if they are not available, in a language or format used by most of the community. (National Indian Education Association & ALA, 1974, n.p.)

These guidelines reflect earlier statements about the types of materials required to appropriately fulfill the informational needs of Indian patrons. But, on a profound level, these goals embody universal criteria that should be implemented in selecting materials pertaining to Native American literature for all types of users.

In terms of American Indian library development, Townley (1978) investigated the period between 1973 and 1978. Brief case study reports were provided by the author which described developments in a variety of settings and library types. In terms of the public library context, the Indian Library Project of the Sioux City Public Library, mentioned earlier, was again cited as an outstanding example of an urban institution striving to improve Indian information access. In Arizona, the Tucson Public Library helped the Papago Tribe to operate four media centers and county libraries throughout the state and extended bookmobile routes to Indian communities within their realm of responsibility. The Brown and Outagamie County Public Libraries in Wisconsin sponsored a small branch library at the Oneida Tribal Center in response to requests by Oneida leaders (pp. 159-64).

Townley (1978) identified the events after 1973 as a time which enhanced practical knowledge regarding American Indian library service. At this point, librarians could pinpoint specific elements which were essential in meeting the informational needs of Native American patrons (p. 168). Two goals which he identified for the future were: "(1) the establishment of a national policy commitment; and (2) the development of a continuing and adequate funding base for American Indian library service" (p. 172).

The year 1979 was a pivotal point in the development of library services for Indian people living in rural, urban, and reservation communities. The White House Conference on Library and Information Services forwarded to the United States President a resolution requesting passage of a National Indian Omnibus Library Bill. The impetus for this resolution originated during the White House Pre-Conference on Indian Library and Information Services On or Near Reservations held October 19-22, 1978 (Mathews, 1980; Metoyer, 1978a; Metoyer-Duran, 1979).

The climate was depicted as a new era of awareness and sensitivity toward cultural diversity. Society at large also understood that "Indian people had some brilliant leaders who not only value literacy but command a range of intellectual aptitudes as well" (Mathews, 1981, p. 4). Furthermore, there was an enhanced understanding that Native Americans also valued libraries as viable information sources for their people.

The creation of new libraries on reservations and the expansion of services to Native Americans in existing libraries stimulated the

formulation and implementation of a research study by Richard G. Heyser and Lotsee Smith (1980). The purpose of this investigation was to ascertain the level of public library services available to Native Americans living in the continental United States and Canada.

To identify the institutions providing services to Native Americans, the authors contacted both state libraries in the United States and provincial agencies in Canada. A total of 252 libraries was identified. Some served only American Indians and others furnished information services to both Indian and non-Indian patrons. Of the 122 questionnaires mailed to Canada, twenty-three responses were received. In terms of the United States, 130 surveys were sent and 60 were returned.

The data elements collected on this survey pertained to such topics as funding, facilities, personnel, collections, and services. The researchers concluded that the programs designed to serve Native Americans specifically, in reality were used by Indian peoples. Adults and children had a nearly equal rate of use, "with the lowest amount of usage by teenagers" (Heyser & Smith, 1980, p. 366). In terms of materials collection activities, the researchers recommended that: "More materials by, for and about Native Americans must be made available. Native Americans have a strong interest in obtaining information on their cultures. Publications should be made available in both English and the languages of the individual tribes" (Heyser & Smith, 1980, p. 367). This recommendation echoed elements stipulated in "Goals for Indian Library and Information Service" published in 1973.

President Ronald Reagan, on October 17, 1984, signed into law Title IV of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). The purpose of Title IV was to "(1) promote the extension of public library service to Indian people living on or near reservations, (2) provide incentives for the establishment of tribal library programs, and (3) improve the administration and implementation of library services for Indians by providing funds to establish and support library programs" (Beaudin, 1986, p. 47). The contents of Title IV reflected the work done earlier during the White House Preconference on Indian Library and Information Services On and Near Reservations and the White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services (Mathews, 1985). Tribes were eligible to apply for grants, and, by 1986, a number of Indian reservation communities had developed libraries with staffs who continued to seek funding to maintain services (Beaudin, 1987). Virginia H. Mathews (1989) described the effect that the development of these libraries had on their communities:

Most important to Indian people on reservations were the benefits of community library services as an essential ingredient of effective

programs for early childhood, literacy, employment, adult education, and the elderly. LSCA IV has engendered self-esteem and a sense of identity to young and older Indians alike. Having their own libraries has lent impetus to parents' efforts to participate in their children's learning and to continue their own. (p. 25)

The members of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) met in Santa Fe, New Mexico, during January 1989 to assess the state of Native American libraries. Members of the commission visited four pueblo libraries—Laguna, Cochiti, Santa Clara, and San Ildefonso—and the next day heard formal testimonies from witnesses representing a variety of tribal communities nationwide. From these sources of information, it was ascertained that funding was “never adequate or consistent” and “remains perhaps the principal problem for native American facilities” (Pelzman, 1989, p. 58). In some cases, libraries were temporarily closed and those that remained open stretched meager resources to serve local communities. Commissioners learned that many children had access to school or public libraries, but, because of distance and transportation factors, their ability to use these outside resources was limited. It was also noted that most youngsters came from homes with televisions but few had books and, therefore, they needed a place to study and do their homework. These libraries served an additional function. As community centers, elders had a nurturing environment in which to share the stories, language, and culture of their nation with tribal youth.

The end result of this review process was an acknowledgment that nearly every representative indicated that their tribe had benefited from Title IV funds. However, a number of problems, needs, and recommendations were identified. The importance of a preconference on Native American libraries was also stressed as a precursor to the next White House Conference.

The literature survey pertaining to the development of Native American libraries revealed four important themes for the period examined. First, these years reflected a time where information services were extended to Indian peoples living in a variety of localities—reservations and rural and urban areas. Public and community libraries played a major role in this process. Second, the profession became more informed about the importance of acquiring materials pertaining to Native American literature for Indian and non-Indian patrons. Third, selection criteria for choosing Native American literature for children and young adults had evolved during this period. Fourth, general studies had been implemented which explored the growth of American Indian libraries, services, and resources in

a variety of environments, but little information had been generated on collection development practices of public librarians in acquiring Native American literature for children and young adults. In an attempt to locate information on this theme, the literature pertaining to Native American materials for young people was investigated within two categories: (1) periodical articles, and (2) essays and specialized bibliographies.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE— COMMENTARIES ON RESOURCES

Rey Mickinock (1971) explored the misconceptions and inaccuracies in juvenile literature pertaining to Native Americans. Examples included children's "easy" books whose illustrators combined the "hair styles of the Eastern tribes with the tipis of the West, the pottery of the Southwestern tribes with the travois of the North" (p. 46). The author supplied a list of recommended titles noted for their accuracy and intelligent perspective in relating Indian life and culture. Mickinock also suggested that librarians personally examine each author and their published works in the selection process.

Mary Gloyne Byler (1974) evaluated the literature created by non-Indian writers. She concluded that most of these materials presented Native American characters in a depersonalized fashion and consistently parodied Indian customs. Byler cited a variety of titles that made a sincere effort to offset negative images portrayed in children's materials, but even these sources were problematic because Indian protagonists were depicted as either "noble superhumans, or as depraved, barbarous subhumans" (p. 39). The author then called upon publishers, librarians, and school administrators to re-examine children's resources and conscientiously separate fact from fiction. She concluded her article by stating: "Only American Indians can tell non-Indians what it is to be Indian. There is no longer any need for non-Indian writers to 'interpret' American Indians for the American public" (p. 39).

Laura Herbst (1975), after examining the children's literature of the period, echoed many of the criticisms expressed by other commentators. Native American characters were consistently stereotyped and outdated views communicated. In her view, most of the resources investigated were "objectionable—objectionable in their treatment of both the Indian individual and the Indian culture" (p. 192). Native Americans were portrayed as either savage and noble or childish and helpless. Furthermore, Indian cultures were consistently depicted as: (1) inferior to white culture; (2) savage and therefore warranting annihilation; or (3) superficial without human

warmth and vitality. Herbst placed much of the responsibility for these serious flaws on white authors who perpetuated the notion of Western civilization's superiority and the need to reshape the world to fit this ethnocentric perspective.

Michael Dorris (1978) discussed two American holidays—Halloween and Thanksgiving—as the “annual twin peaks of Indian stereotyping” (p. 6). Greeting cards, posters, children's costumes, and school projects were identified in conveying images which lacked cultural authenticity and historical accuracy. Examples of instructional materials, program illustrations, and library resources were also cited which consistently communicated damaging information about Native American peoples. The author encouraged parents to become articulate advocates in sensitizing the attitudes of principals, teachers, and librarians. Dorris also emphasized the role of the home environment where children “must be encouraged to articulate any questions they might have about ‘other’ people, and ‘minority’ children must be given ways in which to insulate themselves from real or implied insults, epithets, slights or negative stereotypes” (p. 9).

In response to the damaging images conveyed during major holidays, Arlene Hirschfelder and Jane Califf (1979) formulated a Thanksgiving lesson plan to offset false impressions about Native Americans. Ten learning activities were outlined that could be adapted for various age levels. Recommended resources were also noted that could be used by instructors. Among the materials listed were two Native American publications titled *Akwesasne Notes* and the *Weewish Tree* which the authors considered extremely valuable for classroom use. The importance of juvenile literature was underscored in the objectives of the lesson plan where it was stipulated that one of the desired outcomes for these activities was to “develop critical thinking by analyzing the accuracy of children's books about Pilgrims, Native Americans and ‘The First Thanksgiving’” (p. 6). To increase the reader's sensitivity and enhance the success of this objective, Hirschfelder and Califf included illustrations from children's books that depicted Native Americans as wild savages and graphics from greeting cards which featured animals dressed as Indians. Both of these treatments were perceived as examples which dehumanized Native Americans.

Further investigation of historical themes was done by Joel Taxel (1981). The author examined thirty-two children's novels portraying the American Revolution and concluded that they embodied a disregard for justice by the manner in which minorities were depicted. Even though this analysis focused upon the portrayal of blacks, Taxel noted that a number of works demonstrated a colonial America where

tremendous opportunities existed for personal advancement. On the other hand, these resources failed in explicitly communicating that this freedom was restricted "to whites, and even then, not to all whites. And, of course, none mention that this 'advancement' was achieved at the expense of Native peoples who were either killed or dispossessed" (p. 8).

Juvenile historical fiction was the focus of the analysis conducted by Katharine Everett Bruner (1988). She discussed a number of well-known books and revealed stereotypical depictions of both blacks and Native Americans. Bruner remarked about the excessive use of such damaging terminology as "awful savages," "red devils," and "crazy Indians" who "hardly looked like men" (p. 125). The author concluded that the fact that stereotypes "abound in books from the past that are still read today bears witness to both authors' and readers' willingness to accept generality as specificity, one-sidedness as whole coin, contemporary provincialism as forever justice" (p. 125).

Barbara D. Stoodt and Sandra Ignizio (1976) initiated their article in agreement with other critics by stating the claim that the American Indian in children's literature is "misrepresented, distorted, romanticized, idealized, and victimized" (p. 17). They then proceeded to present a set of criteria accumulated from articles and books pertaining to the representation of Native Americans in juvenile literature. These guidelines were stated in the form of twelve questions:

1. Are the illustrations realistic?
2. Are authentic Indian customs mentioned?
3. Is a specific tribe mentioned, or are all Indians treated as one group?
4. Does the author describe the main character as an individual, with thoughts, philosophies and problems or is he or she a stereotype?
5. Does the author accurately describe the life and situation of the American Indian in the world today?
6. Does the male dominate with little or no mention of the female role in Indian life?
7. Is the Indian portrayed as a savage and a murderer?
8. Is the Indian portrayed as a friend?
9. Is the Indian portrayed as a victim of the white man's world?
10. Is the Indian portrayed as a noble hero?
11. Is degrading vocabulary used to describe the Indian?
12. Is the story credible? (p. 17)

Using these criteria, the authors evaluated seventy books selected from reviews appearing in *Elementary English* and *Horn Book*. Their examination revealed three problematic areas associated with authenticity, characterization, and stylistic language in the depiction of Indian life.

Evaluation criteria were also an important ingredient of Jane Califf's (1977) article where she described her experiences in sensitizing fourth and fifth graders to Native American stereotypes. Her strategy of approach consisted of two distinct phases. The first component

focused upon Native American culture and history as well as the interaction of Indian peoples with European settlers. The second instructional segment pertained to an examination of children's books. To stimulate student discussion, Califf brought materials collected from local libraries to class and presented the following set of questions:

1. Look at the illustrations. Do they show all Native Americans looking alike, red in color or as savages?
2. Listen to the words. Do they imply that Native Americans were/are naturally wild, warlike and bothered peaceful settlers or other Native peoples for no reason?
3. From what you've studied about Native American peoples, does the author seem to be portraying their lives accurately?
4. Does the author give the national name of the people such as Navajo, Hopi, Mohawk, or Cherokee; or does the book just say "Indians", implying that all Native Americans are the same?
5. Do the Native people speak in pidgeon English, in grunts, or do they speak in sentences as all people do? (p. 5)

Another evaluative standard generated from the class interaction was that her students generally agreed "that Native American people would be more likely to know about their own cultures than someone who was an outsider to these cultures" (p. 5).

The periodical literature clearly identified the problem areas encountered in children's and young adult literature in the treatment of Native American peoples. Consistently, authors have attempted to sensitize readers to such issues as stereotypical characterizations, historical inaccuracies, prejudicial use of illustrations, insensitive stylistic language, and cultural ignorance. Another theme reflected in these articles was the debate pertaining to authorship. Namely, the belief that only Indian writers effectively relay an understanding of the Native American reality. These issues have also been restated in a series of criteria for assessing materials. Many aspects of these evaluative standards mirrored criteria established in the professional literature pertaining to library services. However, the extent to which these guidelines are used in the selection process has not been studied, nor have collection development techniques been investigated.

SELECTION CRITERIA—ESSAYS AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

The remaining portion of the professional literature can be classified in two categories. The first grouping are essays contained in monographs concerning cultural pluralism and juvenile literature. The second category are annotated lists or bibliographies of American Indian literature prepared for librarians and teachers. A common thread interwoven throughout these publications comprises discussions pertaining to selection criteria. These evaluative standards are articulated either to inform readers of the reasons for materials

to be included or excluded in a particular compilation or to establish guidelines in creating and managing collections.

Cheryl A. Metoyer's (1978b) chapter on "American Indian People and Children's Resources" was written primarily for public and school librarians. The author strongly suggested that individuals responsible for choosing American Indian materials need to develop an expertise in the issues, culture, and history affecting these peoples. Such a background, she explained, would allow collection development officials to accurately interpret the criteria developed at the Library Services Institute for Minnesota Indians. These guidelines were one and the same as the standards published by ALA's Adult Services Division Subcommittee on Indian Materials and adapted from the work, *American Indians: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Library Resources*, quoted previously in this literature survey.

A spectrum of sources was suggested by Metoyer to facilitate the selection process. Similar to the recommendations made by Hirschfelder and Califf (1979), the Native American publications *Akwesasne Notes* and *The Weewish Tree* were suggested as helpful. A third publication, *Wassaja*, was also noted. Both *Akwesasne Notes* and *Wassaja* were considered significant because they included book reviews and other information of interest. *The Weewish Tree*, published by the American Indian Historical Society, was designed for young people (K-12) and featured stories, games, legends, and articles of historical and contemporary opinion.

In another portion of her essay, Metoyer described the results of surveys pertaining to library programs for American Indian children. A number of issues were elucidated including the factors which contribute to program effectiveness, reading interests of Indian children, and staff training. However, these investigations did not report selection practices and the implementation of assessment criteria.

Althea Helbig (1980) in another essay described the teaching of American literature and the importance of including Native American stories. The author underscored their instructional value not only as sources of entertainment but also as revealing the imaginative vitality of the American Indian oral tradition. It is interesting to note that among the selection aids identified by Helbig was Anna Lee Stensland's compilation, *Literature by and about the American Indian: An Annotated Bibliography for Junior and Senior High School Students*.

Stensland (1973), in her introduction, alerted readers to the fact that the most challenging aspects of using these materials was how to evaluate them. Criteria applied to assessing any body of literature such as characterization, style, and originality were perceived as

relevant in this context; however, "the difficult question if the teacher is non-Indian is whether the story is true to the Indian way" (p. 16). In response to this dilemma, Stensland based her compilation on reviews authored by Indian scholars and bibliographies developed by Native American organizations. The published product of her efforts included items written by both Indians and non-Indians. An implied justification for this methodological approach was furnished:

Some of the books in this bibliography give the white man's point of view, which often is not a very accurate picture of the Indian. Yet, in order to understand what happened to the Indian, it does seem that the reader should understand some of what the white man thought, erroneous though it was. (Stensland, 1973, pp. 17-18)

When the second edition of her bibliography appeared, Stensland was impressed by the increasing numbers of non-Indian authors who treated Native American topics with sensitivity and accuracy.

Mary Gloyne Byler (1973), in contrast, compiled a selective bibliography for young readers limited exclusively to American Indian authors. Byler's explanation was that "non-Indians lack the feelings and insights essential to a valid representation of what it means to be an American Indian" (p. 3). She faulted non-Indian works for perpetuating stereotypical characters, for committing acts of cultural vandalism, and for creating clichéd historical fantasies.

Marjorie F. Gallard (1975) compiled an annotated list of Native American literature for a work titled, *Words Like Freedom: A Multi-Cultural Bibliography* sponsored by the California Association of School Libraries. The creation of this chapter was based upon a perspective attained through Gallard's experiences of living and working on Indian Reservations in New York, Arizona, and New Mexico. Materials included were either those written by American Indians or those in which the major protagonists were Native Americans.

Mary Jo Lass-Woodfin (1978) edited a bibliographic guide for librarians, educators, and parents in choosing materials for young people pertaining to American Indians and Eskimos. Arranged alphabetically by author, more than 800 titles were rated as good, adequate, or poor based on reviewers' (both Indian and non-Indians) experiences working with youngsters. She also identified an important issue. If one were to purchase materials "that were written by knowledgeable tribal members, that never used stereotyping, that contained illustrations showing in exact and minute detail the dress, life, and environment of the group depicted, and that were, in equal measure, well written, well illustrated, and accurate in every word, the final collection would be small indeed" (p. 3).

Her response to this predicament was to suggest that the criteria used for purchasing books in less controversial fields be implemented in choosing materials pertaining to Native Americans. Following this strategy, Lass-Woodfin itemized six points to be considered during the selection process: (1) expect controversy because it is impossible to select items that will be agreeable to all readers; (2) become more knowledgeable about Native Americans, different tribal cultures, history, and lifestyle; (3) read other opinions, bibliographies, and book reviews; (4) use a rating scale created by Native Americans to evaluate children's materials; (5) balance minor deficiencies against redeeming qualities by evaluating the item on the basis of overall literary quality; and (6) select according to the specific purposes of the collection.

Ruth Blank (1981) created a bibliography to serve as a "starter guide" for teachers and Native American parents to help young readers. Even though this compilation listed both Indian and non-Indian authors, asterisks were used to identify books and anthologies either authored or published by American Indians.

Books Without Bias: Through Indian Eyes, edited by Beverly Slapin and Doris Seale (1988), included an assortment of collected essays, reviews, poetry, a directory of Native American publishers, and a recommended bibliographic list. Another component of this work was the inclusion of a set of criteria composed by Slapin, Seale, and third contributor, Rosemary Gonzales. These standards were designed to aid individuals "to choose non-racist and undistorted books about the lives and histories of the People" (p. 117). The checklist was structured in a series of queries grouped under relevant headings. Illustrations and quotes from the published literature were incorporated to assist selectors in distinguishing between negative and positive attributes. A portion of this checklist is duplicated here to demonstrate the depth of analysis stimulated by the questions posed:

Look at Picture Books

In ABC books, is "E" for "Eskimo"?...

In ABC books, is "I" for "Indian"?...

In counting books, are "Indians" counted?...

Are children shown "playing Indian"?...

Are animals dressed as "Indians"?...

Do "Indians" have ridiculous names, like "Indian Two Feet," or "Little Chief"?

Look for Stereotypes

Are Native peoples portrayed as savages, or primitive craftspeople, or simple tribal people, now extinct?

or

Are Native peoples shown as human beings, members of highly defined and complex societies?...

Are Native cultures oversimplified and generalized? Are Native people all one color, one style?

or

Are Native cultures presented as separate from each other, with each culture, language, religion, dress, unique?...

Is the art a mishmash of "generic Indian" designs?

or

Is attention paid to accurate, appropriate design and color; are clothes, dress, houses drawn with careful attention to detail?

Look for Loaded Words

Are there insulting overtones to the language in the book?

Are racist adjectives used to refer to Indian peoples?

or

Is the language respectful?

Look for Tokenism

Are Native people depicted as stereotypically alike, or do they look just like whites with brown faces?

or

Are Native people depicted as genuine individuals? (Slapin & Seale, 1988, pp. 118-28)

Eight additional criteria headings with relevant queries concluded the checklist. These evaluative standards encouraged the selector to (1) "Look for Distortion of History"; (2) "Look at the Lifestyles"; (3) "Look at the Dialogue"; (4) "Look for Standards of Success"; (5) "Look at the Role of Women"; (6) "Look at the Role of Elders"; (7) "Look for the Effects on a Child's Self-Image"; and (8) "Look at the Author's or Illustrator's Background" (pp. 129-44).

This checklist reflects a sophistication and discriminating precision not encountered previously. Benefiting from time's progression and the accompanying evolution of ideas, these criteria perform a profound function. They act as change agents in the selector's conceptual understanding of the issues while the decision-making process of what to purchase is implemented. Enhanced with illustrative quotes and pictures, a selector can internalize each criterion query and comprehend the Native American perspective from both intellectual and visceral levels.

An evaluative checklist was also formulated by Barbara J. Kuipers (1991) in the introduction of *American Indian Reference Books for Children and Young Adults*. Prior to its presentation, Kuipers supplied an informative overview of criteria used in assessing Native American literature for young people from the perspective "of educators, social critics, bibliographers, anthropologists, ethnologists, historians, and librarians" (p. 6). She highlighted the fact that experts had recommended the Indian publications, *Wassaja*, *The Indian Historian*, *The Weewish Tree*, and *Akwesasne Notes* as important review sources. Bibliographies prepared by individuals of

Indian ancestry and standard selection sources were also suggested by Kuipers. Among the compiler's bibliographic recommendations were Lass-Woodfin (1978), Byler (1973), and Slapin and Seale (1988).

Based on the examination of the literature, Kuipers (1991) was able to identify four fundamental areas of concern: "(1) the authorship of entries, (2) the recommendation of entries by Indians, (3) the value system of the American Indian, and (4) the treatment of American Indian life in the literature" (p. 26). This distillation was then reinterpreted in the formulation of an evaluative checklist designed to assist information professionals in selecting American Indian reference items.

The first portion provided open items for recording complete bibliographic information as well as the address of the publisher. Following this section, six criteria sections were listed with relevant assessment subsets identified. A response code was supplied for the librarian to check as assessments were made for each criterion element. The evaluative options included *E* = excellent, *F* = fair, *P* = poor, and *N/A* = not applicable.

Item 1 pertained to the issue of authority, and Kuipers recommended that materials of Indian and non-Indian authorship which satisfy these standards (i.e., author's qualifications, publisher's reputation, and quality of edition) should be included. Other criteria categories incorporated were scope (item 2, i.e., purpose, recency, scholarship), presentation (item 3, i.e., creative, sincere, original, readable), and format (item 4, i.e., physical make-up, arrangement of contents). The treatment of the text (item 5) encompassed the criteria subsets of accuracy, authenticity, and objectivity. These assessment standards were identified as the most critical for detecting bias and stereotypical myths. Criteria for judging illustrations (item 6) incorporated such issues as visual quality and whether American Indians were depicted authentically. Special features (item 7) were assessed in the form of two open questions: (1) "Does the book have distinctive features?" and (2) "Has the publication been recommended by a person or group knowledgeable about American Indians?" (Kuipers, 1991, p. 31). The checklist ended with an overall appraisal where the selector would judge the book as having significant, marginal, or no value.

Even though this checklist is more condensed than the assessment model formulated by Slapin, Seale, and Gonzales, it is a device that can be easily implemented in the daily selection process of the workplace. The tool provides for a feasible approach for acquiring books that are "meaningful, realistic, and representative of American Indian" life (Kuipers, 1991, p. 28). Designed to evaluate reference

items, Kuiper's checklist criteria are also applicable to a variety of printed sources.

Elaine Goley (1992) prepared an annotated bibliography on Native American literature for students from preschool levels through the twelfth grade. Her goal was to capture the cultural diversity of the Native American experience. Reflecting the views of previous bibliographers, Goley included materials written by American Indians but, when resources were not available, items were selected that possessed a high degree of cultural validity due to the creator's expertise. Goley also consulted with scholars of Native American cultures in locating authentic materials.

This portion of the literature survey revealed the further elaboration and refinement of the selection criteria that can be implemented in acquiring Native American literature for young people. Three important sources were identified to facilitate this process: (1) standard review media; (2) specialized bibliographies compiled by individuals of Indian ancestry; and (3) periodicals emanating from Native American presses. Reliance upon the expertise of subject specialists was also recommended to ensure collected materials were accurate and lacked stereotypical images. Yet two fundamental questions remain unanswered. First, to what degree are librarians actually engaged in collecting these materials within the public library context? Second, what criteria and sources are used in guiding selection choices?

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

An instrument was created consisting of five data categories to investigate these research questions (see Appendix). Initial items (1 through 4) were dedicated to accumulating information on collection policies, holdings' characteristics, budgets, and selection responsibilities which pertained specifically to the acquisition of American Indian literature authored for young people. The next questions (items 5 through 6) were created to identify the resources used by librarians to facilitate their decisions. Title options included standard review media and bibliographies compiled by Native Americans. Prior to their inclusion, the American Indian periodicals (*Akwesasne Notes*, *The Indian Historian*, and *The Weewish Tree*) were searched in reference directories (*Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory* and *The Standard Periodical Directory*) to confirm they had not ceased publication. The next query set (item 7) was structured on an abbreviated version of Kuipers's (1991) evaluation checklist to capture data on selection standards used (pp. 29-31). The next questions (items 8 through 9) were formulated to ascertain if expert recommendations and Native American authorship were important criteria to librarians.

The final query (item 10) was included to elicit selector's attitudes about the availability of Indian literature for young patrons.

Since this study is a preliminary one and could not be implemented on a national basis, geographical limitations were imposed. Two states, Alaska and Oklahoma, were selected for identifying the institutional pool where questionnaires would be mailed. This decision was based upon the examination of the 1990 census. Statistical calculations demonstrated that Oklahoma had the largest American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut populations. Alaska had the highest percentage of this group in relation to the total number of state residents (see Table 1). These population configurations were linked to the working assumptions of the research design. Namely, public libraries in states with a high number of Native Americans would be the most likely to collect specialized materials. This acquisition activity would reflect a desire to: (1) provide resources of interest to the Indian community, and (2) increase non-Indian patrons' understanding of Native Americans residing in their state.

TABLE 1
RANK ORDER OF TOP TEN STATES IN TERMS OF NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATIONS

<i>Total Number of American Indians, Eskimos, or Aleuts</i>		<i>Percentage of Total State Population</i>	
<u>State</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Oklahoma	252,420	Alaska	15.6
California	242,164	New Mexico	8.9
Arizona	203,527	Oklahoma	8.0
New Mexico	134,355	South Dakota	7.3
Alaska	85,698	Montana	6.0
Washington	81,483	Arizona	5.6
North Carolina	80,155	North Dakota	4.0
Texas	65,877	Utah	1.9
New York	62,651	Washington	1.7
Michigan	55,638	Nevada	1.6

Source: United States Department of Commerce. Economics and Statistics Administration. Bureau of the Census. (1991). *1990 Census of Population and Housing Characteristics* (Issued August 1991). Calculations based upon data located from Table 3, "Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin."

The population of this study consisted of participants located through an examination of the *American Library Directory*. Institutions identified as public libraries and their respective branches were incorporated in the address list. No attempt was made to locate or isolate branches that resided on reservation sites because these installations were listed as components of larger library systems. They

were not exclusively governed and maintained by tribal governments. When the names of librarians were provided who worked with young patrons, envelopes and letters were specifically addressed to these individuals. Otherwise, the generic identifier "Children's/Young Adult Librarian" was used. On February 14, 1992, the questionnaires (198) were mailed. An introductory letter accompanied the test instrument explaining how the population was derived, the purpose of the study, and that individual respondents and their respective institutions would remain anonymous. A total of forty-nine instruments (24.7 percent) was received. The response rate was deemed adequate because of two factors: (1) the preliminary nature of the investigation, and (2) no inferential statistics would be used in the analysis.

The recorded answers supplied in the questionnaires were extracted and placed on a spreadsheet. This matrix provided a format by which the data could be organized. Each item was then analyzed by applying descriptive statistical methods. Certain responses for related data queries were compared and placed in rank order to begin developing a profile of collection development practices.

DATA ANALYSIS

To the query, Is Native American Literature for young people a specific topic addressed in the library's collection development policy? fifteen respondents (30.6 percent) answered "yes" and thirty (61.2 percent) indicated "no." Four individuals (8.1 percent) did not answer the question. The data seem to indicate that the majority of institutions polled do not stipulate the acquisition of these specialized resources in their policy statements. This finding is further confirmed with the responses gathered in the following two queries.

When asked to indicate the percentage of the children's/young adult collection dedicated to Native American literature, four librarians (8.1 percent) chose the "none" category and thirty-two (65.3 percent) selected the lowest range level (1 percent to 9 percent). These data are further verified in the responses collected regarding the allocation of funds. Seventeen respondents (34.6 percent) reported low levels of funding (1 percent to 9 percent) and twenty-one (42.8 percent) responded that no specific allocations were designated for the purchase of these resources. Despite the fact that these libraries are located in states with large American Indian populations, anemic levels of acquisition activity seem to occur in the procurement of related materials.

In an open item, respondents were asked to designate who was responsible for selecting materials for children's/young adult collections. An analysis of the answers did not reveal a consistent

pattern. Selection assignments varied in accordance with the unique hierarchy of each library or institutional system. A sample of these responses include: "Branch Librarian," "Library Director and Children's Librarian," "Selection Team," "Materials Selections Officer," and "Youth Services Librarian."

In the next query, librarians were asked to rate selection sources in choosing American Indian literature for children. A Likert scale was provided with a range from one (least important) to five (most important). From the responses received, a rank order of titles was formulated based on the calculation of mean scores. This computation involved summing each participant's rating for a specific title and then dividing the resulting figure by the number of respondents. A zero value was applied in cases where no assessment was provided. This resulted in a ranked list of sources as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
RANK ORDER OF RESPONSES RATING THE IMPORTANCE OF SELECTION SOURCES
IN ACQUIRING NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Title	Average Rating
<i>Booklist</i>	3.08
<i>Children's Catalog</i>	2.53
<i>School Library Journal</i>	2.38
<i>Library Journal</i>	2.29
<i>Horn Book Magazine</i>	2.04
<i>Public Library Catalog</i>	2.02
<i>Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books</i>	1.97
<i>Publishers Weekly</i>	1.93
<i>Fiction Catalog</i>	1.89
<i>Junior High School Catalog</i>	1.71
<i>Book Links</i>	1.46
<i>Voice of Youth Advocates</i>	1.46
<i>Senior High School Catalog</i>	1.42
<i>Kirkus Review</i>	1.36
<i>The Indian Historian</i>	0.93
<i>Book Report</i>	0.87
<i>ALAN Review</i>	0.79
<i>The Weewish Tree</i>	0.71

Six titles received the highest mean scores (*Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *Children's Catalog*, *School Library Journal*, *Horn Book*, and *Public Library Catalog*). In the view of the librarians polled, these materials were rated at average or below average levels of usefulness in facilitating the selection process. No title received an average rating above 3.08. The American Indian periodicals received some of the lowest ratings of the titles listed in the questionnaire: *The Indian Historian* (0.87); *The Weewish Tree* (0.67); and *Akwesasne*

Notes (0.63). In the "other" category, some isolated additions were noted. Examples of these responses are: "bibliographies supplied by the state library"; "newspaper reviews"; and "publishers' catalogs".

The data seem to demonstrate that practitioners perceived only a few standard sources as barely adequate in assisting them. On the whole, they were not familiar with nor did they use the Native American periodicals recommended in the professional literature. To some extent, these depressed ratings may be linked to the low level of collection development activity associated with the acquisition of Native American materials.

Many librarians left responses blank when asked to rate (on the same Likert scale) the specialized bibliographies in terms of their importance in the selection process. Twenty-one (42.2 percent) to twenty-five individuals (46.8 percent) did not answer each of the title options supplied. Some librarians wrote unsolicited marginal notes stating that they were unfamiliar with these sources. For the titles rated, the analysis indicated that they were not considered essential in choosing materials. The following mean scores were calculated: Byler (1.10), Kuipers (1.32), Lass-Woodfin (1.24), and Slapin and Seale (1.32). Converging with the findings pertaining to Indian periodicals, it seems that librarians are not familiar with the specialized information sources associated with Native American literature and cultures.

In the next query, librarians were asked to assess the importance of the listed criteria in deciding what American Indian materials should be included in the collection. The same Lickert scale was used as in the previous query items. Mean scores were calculated for each standard, and a rank order of responses was formulated. This configuration is displayed in Table 3.

The criterion receiving the highest mean score was "readability" (4.06). This response indicates librarians' desire to build collections that would maintain the reading interests of young patrons. The criteria next in rank are "authenticity" (3.85), "accuracy" (3.81), and "objectivity" (3.42). These data are significant because Kuipers considered them "the most critical evaluation criteria for American Indian printed materials" (Kuipers, 1991, p. 28). However, it is important to note that her checklist included a variety of other subtopics to be assessed for each of these three criteria. The data seem to indicate a sensitivity to issues related to multicultural publications in general and not specifically to Native American literature. This finding is supported because the previous data demonstrated that respondents were unfamiliar with resources dedicated to Native Americans. Furthermore, librarians did not include in the open categories any of the subcriteria stipulated by

TABLE 3
RANK ORDER OF RESPONSES RATING THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITERIA IN SELECTING
NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Average Rating</i>
Readability	4.06
Authenticity	3.85
Accuracy	3.81
Objectivity	3.42
Recency	3.38
Purpose Fulfilled	3.38
Author's Reputation	3.10
Illustration	2.95
Range of Subject Matter	2.93
Sincerity	2.85
Creativity	2.77
Originality	2.77
Physical Make-Up	2.75
Arrangement	2.73
Bibliography, Scholarship	2.57
Publisher's Reputation	2.22

Kuipers (i.e., "avoidance of stereotypes," "positive values," "sensitive language" [p. 30]).

The next criteria assessed in rank order are: "recency" (3.38); "purpose" (3.38); and "author's reputation" (3.10). These assessment standards are used in evaluating all types of literature and are not specifically related to American Indian materials. The remaining criteria were ranked with average scores of 2.95 or below. Very few librarians responded to the "other" options. Among the selection criteria included were: "need and demand," "patron requests," "materials associated with local tribes," and "regional interest." No additional input was provided regarding the evaluation of illustrations. Kuiper's checklist incorporated a variety of subcriteria associated with assessing the quality of pictorial representations which reflected the commentaries within the professional literature. The lack of these responses in the open items is a further indication that children/young adult librarians do not possess a general consciousness of the standards associated with Native American literature.

On the same Likert scale, respondents were asked to assess how important were the criteria of having a publication: (1) recommended by a person or group knowledgeable about American Indians, and (2) authored or prepared by an American Indian. In the respondent's view, recommendations by those knowledgeable of the Indian reality (mean score of 3.69) were more significant than the criterion linked to Native American authorship (mean score of 2.61).

The last query item was also constructed on a Likert scale. Respondents were asked to rate the availability of American Indian literature for young people. The response options ranged from 1 (extremely accessible) to 5 (not accessible). From the data collected, a mean score of 2.61 was calculated which indicated that librarians perceived these materials to be at levels of accessibility barely above average.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The data analysis seems to reveal the following collection development practices employed in procuring Native American materials for young people:

1. The acquisition of these materials is not a stipulated policy goal in a majority of cases.
2. Native American literature is not emphasized in children/young adult collections.
3. Budget allocations for acquiring these specialized materials are either low or nonexistent.
4. Regarding selection sources, librarians indicated that most titles were either of average or below average use in assisting them in choosing American Indian literature to purchase. Titles identified as the most helpful were standard bibliographies and traditional review media.
5. Librarians were not familiar with specialized bibliographies and Native American periodicals recommended in the professional literature as valuable selection aids.
6. The depressed ratings regarding selection sources (general and specialized) may be linked to the low levels of collection development activity associated with the acquisition of Native American materials.
7. The criteria considered most important to librarians in the selection process were readability, authenticity, objectivity, accuracy, recency, purpose, and author's reputation.
8. Librarians seem to employ selection criteria that are relevant to all types of materials and to a lesser extent on evaluative standards associated with multicultural literature. Yet the data do not demonstrate a rigorous employment of selection criteria pertaining specifically to American Indian resources.
9. Recommendations by those knowledgeable of the Indian reality were regarded to be more important criteria than those related to Native American authorship.
10. Librarians perceived Native American literature for young people to be available at levels of accessibility barely above average.

The data seem to demonstrate a rather anemic portrait of collection development activities dedicated to procuring Native American literature for young people in the public library context. These findings are particularly disturbing because these institutions are located in areas with large Native American communities. Admittedly, these results are preliminary, but the question must be asked, Is this snapshot of collection development practices a current trend nationwide? Further investigation is warranted to either refute or support these findings.

A follow-up study needs to be conducted on the collection development practices of the public libraries in Oklahoma and Alaska. This investigation also needs to be extended to other community libraries in states where large Native American populations reside. Will the collection of additional data furnish an overall picture that depicts a greater vitality in the procurement of these specialized materials? Or, will this preliminary sketch be confirmed?

Studies investigating acquisition patterns in community libraries located on reservations need to be implemented. Do collection development strategies differ in these localities? Despite funding shortages, are these techniques more effective in locating appropriate materials? If so, could this paradigm then be transferred to public libraries outside the reservation context?

What are the collection development practices in school library media centers serving both Indian and non-Indian patrons? Are Native American resources overlooked or is there a concentrated effort to provide children and young adults access to unbiased materials? Should our schools not be the generators of human understanding and respect for ethnic diversity? On the other hand, are stereotypical and damaging views of the American Indian perpetuated in young minds because materials are either not collected or selected in uninformed ways?

Since six standard sources (*Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *Children's Catalog*, *School Library Journal*, *Horn Book*, and *Public Library Catalog*) were viewed as the most important in the selection process, to what degree do Native American materials appear in these publications? These tools need to be examined to ascertain the number of relevant citations listed. What is the quality of the titles located? A pool of citations could be isolated and physically located spanning a specified time period. An analysis could then be implemented using Kuipers's evaluative checklist. In this fashion, the quantity and quality of the Native American resources highlighted in these selection aids could be assessed.

Another factor to consider is the fact that so few studies exist in the professional literature pertaining to collection development

strategies in acquiring Native American materials, not only for young patrons but also for adults. Does this trend exist because there is a lack of interest in the concerns and issues of the Indian community? Is it that these specialized sources are deemed as irrelevant for non-Indian readers as well?

Other relevant questions warrant investigation. Are the patterns reflected in this study repeated in the procurement practices of other multicultural materials? Do young people have access to thoughtfully constructed collections that relay positive unbiased treatment of the black, Hispanic, or Asian experience? Is it only Native American resources that are acquired in a haphazard fashion? More profound issues are: To what extent does the profession pay lip service to the concept of multicultural collections but in reality uses selection criteria and sources formulated by the white-oriented establishment? Have the political awareness and consciousness raising decades of the 1960s and 1970s been overshadowed by the self-indulgent and self-centered 1980s, propelled by government policies of neglect? Has this malaise been translated into the ways we collect materials for patrons? This query is posed specifically about Native American literature but is also expressed in terms of all multicultural materials.

These questions need to be researched and answered. If the findings demonstrate that there is a divergence between philosophical intent and reality, the profession needs to realign itself with the cultural diversity of the American landscape. Our society is a richly diverse tapestry of cultures and peoples. Libraries and librarians can enhance interlocking social patterns by furnishing materials that will facilitate communication and cooperation. On the other hand, the profession could elect an easy passive role and evolve into another dysfunctional outdated American component that ruins hopes for bright tomorrows.

APPENDIX

PUBLIC LIBRARY CHILDREN'S/YOUNG ADULT
LIBRARIANS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Please circle responses that reflect the collection development activities of your institution in acquiring American Indian literature for children and young adult patrons. In some cases, response items include blank spaces to allow the recording of individualized answers.

1. Is Native American Literature for young people a specific topic addressed in the library's collection development policy?

Yes No

2. What percentage of your children's/young adult *collection* is dedicated to American Indian literature?

50%-59% 40%-49% 30%-39% 20%-29% 10%-19% 1%-9% none

3. What percentage of your 1991/1992 children's/young adult *budget* is allocated for acquiring Native American literature?

50%-59% 40%-49% 30%-39% 20%-29% 10%-19% 1%-9% none

4. Who selects materials for the children's/young adult collection in your library?

5. Please rate the selection sources listed below with 1 being the *least* important and 5 being the *most* important in terms of assisting you in choosing American Indian literature for children and young adults:

A. <i>Children's Catalog</i>	1	2	3	4	5
B. <i>Fiction Catalog</i>	1	2	3	4	5
C. <i>Junior High School Catalog</i>	1	2	3	4	5
D. <i>Public Library Catalog</i>	1	2	3	4	5
E. <i>Senior High School Catalog</i>	1	2	3	4	5
F. <i>Akwesasne Notes</i>	1	2	3	4	5
G. <i>ALAN Review</i>	1	2	3	4	5
H. <i>Booklist</i>	1	2	3	4	5
I. <i>Book Links</i>	1	2	3	4	5
J. <i>Book Report</i>	1	2	3	4	5
K. <i>Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books</i>	1	2	3	4	5
L. <i>Horn Book Magazine</i>	1	2	3	4	5
M. <i>The Indian Historian</i>	1	2	3	4	5
N. <i>Kirkus Reviews</i>	1	2	3	4	5
O. <i>Library Journal</i>	1	2	3	4	5
P. <i>School Library Journal</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Q. <i>Publishers Weekly</i>	1	2	3	4	5
R. <i>Voice of Youth Advocates</i>	1	2	3	4	5
S. <i>The Weewish Tree</i>	1	2	3	4	5
T. <i>Other</i> _____	1	2	3	4	5
U. <i>Other</i> _____	1	2	3	4	5

6. Please rate the specialized bibliographies listed below with 1 being the *least* important and 5 being the *most* important in terms of assisting you in choosing Native American literature for children and young adults:

A. Byler, Mary Gloyne. (1973). *American Indian Authors for Young Readers: A Selected Bibliography*.

least important 1 2 3 4 5 most important

B. Kuipers, Barbara J. (1991) *American Indian Reference Books For Children and Young Adults*.

least important 1 2 3 4 5 most important

C. Lass-Woodfin, Mary Jo (ed.). (1978). *Books on American Indians and Eskimos: A Selection Guide for Children and Young Adults*.

least important 1 2 3 4 5 most important

D. Slapin, Beverly and Doris Seale. (1988). *Books Without Bias: Through Indian Eyes*.

least important 1 2 3 4 5 most important

7. What criteria do you use in deciding what materials pertaining to American Indian literature should be included in the children's and young adult collection? Please rate each criterion listed below with 1 being the *least* important and 5 being the *most* important in making your selection choices:

A. Author's reputation	1	2	3	4	5
B. Publisher's reputation	1	2	3	4	5
C. Purpose fulfilled	1	2	3	4	5
D. Range of subject matter	1	2	3	4	5
E. Recency, up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
F. Bibliography, scholarship	1	2	3	4	5
G. Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
H. Sincerity	1	2	3	4	5
I. Originality	1	2	3	4	5
J. Readability	1	2	3	4	5
K. Physical Make-up (type, binding, paper)	1	2	3	4	5
L. Arrangement (Preface, Table of Contents, Index, Appendices)	1	2	3	4	5
M. Accuracy	1	2	3	4	5
N. Authenticity	1	2	3	4	5
O. Objectivity	1	2	3	4	5
P. Illustration (Quality, Placement)	1	2	3	4	5
Q. Other _____	1	2	3	4	5
R. Other _____	1	2	3	4	5

8. When selecting materials, how important a criteria is it to have a publication recommended by a person or group knowledgeable about American Indians?

least important 1 2 3 4 5 most important

9. When selecting materials, how important a criteria is it to have a publication authored or prepared by an American Indian?
least important 1 2 3 4 5 most important
10. How would you rate the availability of materials on American Indian literature for children and young adults?
extremely accessible 1 2 3 4 5 not accessible

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The Contributions of Alternative Press Publishers to Multicultural Literature for Children

KATHLEEN T. HORNING

ABSTRACT

ALTERNATIVE PRESS PUBLISHERS make important contributions to the field of multicultural literature by providing children with information and perspectives typically not found in books from corporate presses. This article profiles several alternative presses that currently publish for children and describes the nature of the literature each publishes. Particular attention is given to independent presses owned and operated by African-Americans and Native Americans.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1980, the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has been systematically collecting children's books published by alternative presses. For the purposes of acquisition, the CCBC has defined "alternative press" as a small, independent publisher, unaffiliated with national or multinational corporations or organizations, whose major function is book publication" (Griffith & Seipp, 1982, p. 29).

By June 1992, the CCBC Alternative Press Collection contained more than 1,500 titles published since 1970 by 317 alternative presses in the United States and Canada. This noncirculating collection includes all in-print and out-of-print titles identified by the Special Collections Coordinator at the CCBC, making it the largest collection of alternative press children's books in the United States.

In addition to collecting the books, the Cooperative Children's Book Center also maintains information files for each alternative

press. The publisher file typically includes catalogs, booklists, and promotional material generated by the press; photocopies of book reviews; articles about the publisher; and correspondence between the publisher and the CCBC Special Collections Coordinator. These files are available to anyone engaged in research at the CCBC.

The CCBC Alternative Press Collection is as rich and diverse as any collection of children's books. It includes all genres—picture books, fiction, nonfiction, poetry, folklore, and drama. Quality ranges from poor to outstanding, just as it does with the books from corporate publishers. What makes many alternative press books distinctive is their point of view. Within the CCBC Alternative Press Collection, one finds a variety of perspectives and ideas, as well as types of information otherwise unavailable to children. This is especially true in the area of multicultural literature, where publishing by and about people of color is markedly different from that of corporate publishers. While the latter strive to appeal to general markets, alternative presses often aim for a smaller more cohesive audience publishing with a strength of purpose.

A COMMITMENT TO MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE

One of the oldest children's alternative presses still in existence, Children's Book Press was founded in 1975 in response to the dearth of multicultural materials. While visiting her son's Head Start classroom in the San Francisco Mission district in 1973, Harriet Rohmer was surprised to see that, although most of the children were Hispanic, none of the books in the classroom reflected their lives or cultures. In an interview with Beverly Slapin (1987), Rohmer said, "I remember listening as the teacher read the book to the kids. It's a nice little book but certainly had nothing to do with the reality of these children, even the few of them who were white. So I felt I had to do something about it" (p. 7).

Rohmer delved into folklore archives looking for suitable stories from Central and South America which could be retold for children in Spanish and English. She worked with teachers and community members in the Mission District, asking them for their versions of the folktales. Once the stories had been written and rewritten in the two languages, Rohmer employed a collective of women muralists in San Francisco, *Mujeres Muralistas*, to illustrate the stories in bold vibrant colors. The result was a collection of ten brightly illustrated bilingual picture books in a folktale series called "Fifth World Tales." The stories were from diverse cultures, such as the Aztec of Mexico, the Taino of Puerto Rico, and the Yahgan of Chile. Not only did they provide much needed literature from Native American and

Hispanic traditions, they also served a need for bilingual and Spanish-language materials for children.

Rohmer soon branched out and published contemporary stories such as *My Aunt Otilia's Spirits*=*Los Espíritus de mi Tía Otilia* by Richard García (1978), as well as folktales and original stories from African-American, Asian American, and Native American traditions. Perhaps most distinctive, within the context of children's literature as a whole, are the stories Rohmer has published from Asian and Asian American sources. For example, two bilingual stories feature refugee children in the United States. Tran-Khánh-Tuyet's (1977) *The Little Weaver of Thai-Yen Village* is based on the true story of a Vietnamese girl whose family was killed in the war and who was brought to the United States for medical treatment. Said one reviewer: "The heroine's experiences are not the type that American children are generally exposed to in literature, but her agonizing reality is broadening without being harsh" (Ecklund, 1987, p. D-1). *Aekyung's Dream*, by Min Paek (1978), features a Korean immigrant girl frustrated by English and tired of classmates who call her "Chinese Eyes." More recently, Children's Book Press has published the folktale *Nine-In-One Grr! Grr!* by Blia Xiong (1989), the first children's story published in the United States from the Hmong people of Laos. Prior to coming to the United States, the Hmong, a minority culture within Laos, had no written language. *Nine-In-One Grr! Grr!* is a story Xiong recalled hearing her elders tell when she was a child in Laos. For Children's Book Press, it was adapted by storyteller Cathy Spagnoli and illustrated by Chinese American artist Nancy Hom who based her illustrations on the traditional style used by Hmong women in their intricate needlework known as "storycloths."

In 1992, seventeen years after the establishment of the publishing company, Children's Book Press has twenty-five titles in print, seven of which are also available with bilingual audiocassettes. Not only has Harriet Rohmer accomplished her goal of providing culturally meaningful picture books for children of new immigrant groups, in many cases the Children's Book Press titles continue to be the only titles available in the United States for young children which deal with a particular cultural group.

Several other alternative presses established in the United States by white women take a special interest in publishing multicultural literature for children, often as a natural outgrowth of the publisher's commitment to feminism and social change. Ruth Gottstein, who founded Volcano Press in 1976 with a special focus on women's issues and the Pacific Rim (Horning, 1988, p. 65), began to publish children's books in 1989. The first original children's title she published,

Berchick by Esther Silverstein Blanc, featured a Jewish homesteading family living in Wyoming at the turn of the century. While there are many works of historical fiction for children about homesteading families, Blanc's is unique for its inclusion of Jewish cultural details and values flawlessly woven into the action of the story. The three children's books published by Volcano since 1990 originated outside the United States. Irene Hedlund's (1990) *Mighty Mountain and the Three Strong Women* is a Japanese folktale first published in Denmark and translated into English for Volcano Press by Judith Elkin. In addition to providing an amusing tale from the Japanese oral tradition, it also serves as a feminist alternative to male-centered hero tales. While the story's protagonist, Mighty Mountain, is a sumo wrestler purported to be the strongest man in Japan, he is no match for the three generations of mountain women he meets on his way to the Emperor's wrestling match. Grandma, the strongest of the three, undertakes Mighty Mountain's training to get him in proper shape for the upcoming match.

Another children's book with a feminist perspective was published by Volcano in 1991. First published in Great Britain, *Mother Gave a Shout: Poems by Women and Girls* is a spirited multicultural anthology compiled by Susanna Steele and Morag Styles which includes original poems and traditional rhymes from a wide variety of times and cultures. Most recently, Volcano has published the U.S. edition of an unusual illustrated story originally published in Sweden. *Save My Rainforest*, by Monica Zak (1992), is based on the true story of Omar Castillo, an eight-year-old Mexican boy who walked 870 miles from Mexico City to the Selva Lacadona, the last remaining rain forest in Mexico. Since his pilgrimage, Omar (who is now eleven years old) continually appeals to Mexican government officials, advocating on behalf of children who want to inherit the natural beauty of the Mexican rain forest. Omar's battle is far from over; after he marched around the presidential residence 200 times, the president invited him in to talk but has not given Omar much more than an audience. Although *Save My Rainforest* does not have the neat happy ending a fictional children's story might have, it does give children hope that they can advocate for themselves and work together to change things.

Children's Book Press and Volcano Press are representative of small independent publishers owned and operated by white women who are committed to producing anti-sexist, anti-racist literature for children. Other presses that fall into this category are Lollipop Power of Carrboro, North Carolina; New Seed Press of Berkeley, California; and Open Hand Publishing of Seattle, Washington. All of these presses have been in existence for at least ten years and were publishing

multicultural literature during a time when corporate publishing houses were saying there was no market for it. In a series of interviews about censorship conducted by Mark I. West in 1987, African-American author/artist John Steptoe cited the "no market" excuse as a subtle form of censorship:

After doing this type of work for nearly 20 years, I've concluded that the industry is inherently hostile toward blacks....When you talk with [publishers] about it, they usually squirm and make excuses. There are exceptions, of course, but most of them will say, "We would publish more books by blacks, but it's company policy to only publish established authors." Or, "We would like to, but we have not seen any good manuscripts lately." Or, "We would like to, but books about blacks don't sell very well any more." These problems may well be true, but there is more than one way to react to them. You can choose to hide behind them, or you can work to solve them....In retrospect, those years [the late 1960s and early 1970s] when publishers welcomed blacks amounted to a little more than a flash in the pan. Since then the number of black picture book authors is almost back to where it was before. (p. 108)

Statistics compiled at the Cooperative Children's Book Center from 1985 to 1992 support Steptoe's claim about the small numbers of children's books published in the mid-to-late 1980s which were written and illustrated by African-Americans. Of approximately 2,500 books published in the United States for children and young adults in 1985 and 1986, only 18 in each year were written and/or illustrated by African-Americans; in 1987, there were 30 out of 3,000 titles; in 1988, 39 out of 3,000; in 1989, 48 out of 4,500; and in 1990, 51 out of 5,000 (Kruse & Horning, 1991, p. vii).

The early 1990s showed a slight increase in the percentage of books by African-American book creators. In 1991, of the 4,000 books published, 70 were written and/or illustrated by African-Americans (Horning, et al., 1992, p. 1). A further breakdown of these statistics (see Table 1), however, reveals the significance of alternative press publishing.

TABLE 1
CHILDREN'S BOOKS BY AFRICAN-AMERICANS

	1989	1990	1991
Total number of books by African-Americans	48	51	70
Total number of books by African-Americans published by alternative presses	9	9	16
Total number of books by African-Americans published by African-American presses	7	5	14

Although children's books published by alternative presses represent only 3 percent of the total number of children's titles published in any given year, in 1991, nearly 23 percent of the total number of children's books by African-Americans were published by alternative presses. Keeping in mind Steptoe's reference to "established authors," the alternative press role becomes even more important when one considers only those books which represent the first published work of their author and/or illustrator. In 1991, 45 percent of first books by African-Americans (ten out of twenty-two titles) were published by alternative presses.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN PRESSES

Although African-American presses have been a force in U.S. book publishing since 1817 (Joyce & Jenkins, 1978, p. 907), Fraser (1973) claims that it was not until the early 1960s that African-American publishers began publishing books for children (p. 3422). The CCBC Alternative Press Collection currently houses children's books from fifteen active African-American presses. Of these, nine presses publish a combination of children's and adult books; six publish children's books only. All of the African-American presses which limit their publications to children's books have been established since 1987.

Third World Press was founded in Chicago in 1967 by poet Haki R. Madhubuti with an initial investment of \$400 (Dennis, 1992, p. 3). Over the past twenty-five years, Third World has published works by major African-American scholars, essayists, poets, and novelists. Today it is the oldest African-American press that publishes books in all genres. Although the focus of the press is on adult literature, Madhubuti has always demonstrated a commitment to children and children's books, publishing Third World Press's first children's book in 1970 (*Jackie* by Leuveste Lewis). In a 1984 interview with Donnarae MacCann and Olga Richard, he said of his goals for children's publishing: "I think that literature—if it's working—talks about the possibilities, about what you can become, what is beautiful in the world....We have to think about what is best for the child, and we can do that in ways that do not compromise the intelligence or development of the child" (p. 209).

Third World Press's children's books certainly speak to the possibilities in life for African-American children. A 1974 alphabet book by Dexter Oliver and Patricia Oliver, *I Want to Be...*, uses photographs of African-American children acting out professions such as engineer, plumber, and veterinarian. The brief accompanying text stresses the contributions each worker can make to the African-American community, for example: "I want to be a mathematician

so that I can use mathematics to build a strong nation as our African ancestors did centuries ago" (p. 29). Jabari Mahiri's *The Day They Stole the Letter J* (1981) successfully combines fantasy and reality in the story of two friends, Jelani and Jerome, who play a practical joke on the neighborhood barber/storyteller by hiding a large *J* he has carved out of wood. Their joke backfires, however, when they realize that there was magic in the *J*. Once it is hidden, everything beginning with the letter *J* disappears, including, of course, Jelani and Jerome. Third World Press has also published short stories and poetry for young children by such notable writers as Gwendolyn Brooks (*The Tiger Who Wore White Gloves*), Mari Evans (*Singing Black*), and Sonia Sanchez (*A Sound Investment*). As the press enters its twenty-fifth year, Madhubuti expects to expand operations, particularly in the area of publishing for children:

Over one-quarter of our publishing schedule for 1992 will be children's and young adult material, which is absolutely necessary....In 1993 and beyond I think that our capacity to publish quality work will only be limited by what we decide to do ourselves. The sky is the limit in terms of what we can and cannot do. (Davis, 1992, p. 4)

Writers & Readers Publishing Cooperative was founded in London, England, in 1974 by an African-American man, Glenn Thompson, who grew up in Harlem and Bedford Stuyvesant (Davis, 1989, p. 31). This community-based publishing house had as its mission "to advance the needs of cultural literacy, rather than to cater to an 'advanced' but limited readership" (p. 31). During these years, Writers & Readers became best known for its ...For Beginners series, documentary comic books that introduce major thoughts and thinkers. To date they have published over forty titles in the series on topics such as black history, computers, Darwin, and Marx. The series, which makes knowledge and information accessible to both readers and nonreaders, has been translated into sixteen languages and published in more than twenty-five countries.

In 1986, Thompson returned to the United States, moving his publishing company home to Harlem. Soon after his return, he launched a children's imprint, Black Butterfly Children's Books. In a press release announcing Writers & Readers' new endeavor, Thompson said he saw it as "the beginning of a tradition of black writers, artists, and publishers, cooperating to send important messages to a new generation of young readers. We are here to produce quality children's books that reflect racial pride and cultural literacy" (Black Butterfly Children's Books, 1989, pp. 1-2).

The first children's book from Black Butterfly was *Nathaniel Talking* written by Eloise Greenfield and illustrated by Jan Spivey Gilchrist, a collection of eighteen first-person poems written in the

voice of a nine-year-old African-American boy. Nathaniel talks about his life, some of his favorite memories, and his hopes for the future. In the poem "I See My Future," Nathaniel imagines himself as a strong African-American man:

...my serious man face
 thinking
 my laughing man face
 my big Nathaniel me
 moving through the world
 doing good and unusual
 things. (p. 27)

Seldom has an alternative press children's book received the attention and critical acclaim accorded *Nathaniel Talking*. Gilchrist won the American Library Association's Coretta Scott King Award for her illustrations, while Greenfield won a Coretta Scott King Honor for her writing. Gilchrist and Greenfield collaborated on five books for Black Butterfly in 1991. Four of the five are a series of board books featuring African-American toddlers, a much-needed contribution to this genre. The fifth, *First Pink Light*, is a humorous yet poignant picture story about four-year-old Tyree who is determined to stay awake all night to surprise his daddy who is returning from a month-long absence. In 1991, Black Butterfly also published *Tommy Traveler in the World of Black History*, written and illustrated by Tom Feelings, in which significant events in the lives of Phoebe Fraunces, Emmet Till, Aesop, Frederick Douglass, Crispus Attucks, and Joe Louis are dramatized in a comic strip format.

In explaining why he began publishing books for children, Glenn Thompson said:

Children's publishing needed publishers who are concentrating on an Afrocentric perspective, using black writers and black artists. There always has been someone outside our culture looking in and writing about it. We are expected by the industry to accept automatically Eurocentric culture and ways of thinking. To have our books sold, we feel we have to cross over culturally in our thinking and our writing. And there are not enough of us complaining about that. (in Parrish, 1989, p. 36)

Another publishing company that focuses on afrocentric perspectives is Just Us Books in Orange, New Jersey, established by Wade Hudson and Cheryl Willis Hudson. In 1977, Cheryl Willis Hudson set out to find artwork to decorate her daughter's room. She was unable to find the sort of thing she was looking for—bold graphics that reflected African-American children—so she created them herself, drawing whimsical children forming alphabet letters with their bodies to spell out her daughter's name (Donnelly, 1987,

p. 2). The "Afro-Bets Kids" caught on locally and, after a few years, the Hudsons decided to expand their market by creating posters and T-shirts featuring the characters. In 1987, Just Us published their first book, *The Afro-Bets ABC Book* (1987a). Each letter is accompanied by three pictures of objects beginning with that letter and generally one of the three is specific to African heritage (cornrows, kente cloth, mask, etc.). "We didn't just do a book with a black face, which is what some publishers have done," said Cheryl Hudson. "We pull from African-American culture to make meaningful books. The characters in the books are different, with different color skins, faces and lips—like real kids. And real kids respond to that" (Sullivan, 1991, p. 43). A companion to the ABC book, *Afro-Bets 123 Book* (1987b), was published the following year.

Just Us Books' next publishing project was a departure from the trademark characters. Although the Afro-Bets Kids are used here as a typographical device, *Afro-Bets First Book of Black Heroes A-Z* is a straightforward book of information aimed at older children. Authors Wade Hudson and Valerie Wilson Wesley provide capsule biographies for fifty-one African and African-American men and women who have played a significant role in shaping history. Like Writers & Readers' "...For Beginners" series, this book makes information easily accessible to readers and nonreaders alike. In 1989, the Afro-Bets Kids were more fully realized by artist George Ford as children in a classroom learning about the motherland from a Ghanaian visitor. Veronica Ellis's *Afro-Bets First Book About Africa: An Introduction for Young Readers* uses an original approach and a sophisticated design to stress the richness of history and cultures of the continent, instilling young readers with a sense of pride in their heritage.

In 1990, the Hudsons launched a new series, Feeling Good Books, picture books intended to enhance the self-esteem of young African-American children. The first book in the series, *Bright Eyes, Brown Skin* was co-authored by Cheryl Hudson and Bernette G. Ford. George Ford's full-color illustrations show four children engaged in typical activities in a preschool, while the text lovingly describes the children's physical features: "Bright eyes, brown skin.../A heart-shaped face,/A dimpled chin./Bright eyes,/Cheeks that glow.../A playful grin,/A perfect nose./Very special hair and clothes...." *Jamal's Busy Day*, by Wade Hudson, the second title in the Feeling Good series, was published in 1991 as was a companion book to *Afro-Bets Book of Black Heroes A-Z*. *Great Women in the Struggle: Book of Black Heroes, Volume Two*, edited by Toyomi Igus, includes biographical sketches of eighty-four African and African-American women.

Just Us Books has enjoyed a phenomenal success in its first five years. By 1991, they had over 360,000 books in print and generated revenues of \$1.2 million (Donnelly, 1991, p. 43). Wade Hudson (1991) attributes the company's success to their familiarity with the African-American community:

Our success is directly linked to our ability to reach a market that the major publishing houses have not found. They may never reach those markets...because they don't *know* my community. I know more about the buying habits of my community than anyone else, because I live in that community. I know the institutions, clubs, and organizations in that community, and I know how to tap into them. (p. 78)

That the book-buying public is hungry for Afrocentric children's literature is also demonstrated by the success of a self-published title, *Tears for Ashan* (1989). Like Cheryl Hudson, Daisy Jefferson of Memphis, Tennessee, created her own materials to share with her young children. When she was unable to find appropriate library books to answer questions her preschool-aged children were asking her about slavery, Jefferson researched the topic and wrote the book herself. With an investment of \$10,000, she formed her own publishing company, Creative Press Works, hired an illustrator for the book, and printed it with Desktop Publishers in Memphis in an initial run of 1,700 copies (Koepfel, 1989, p. 3). *Tears for Ashan* is a fictionalized account of a young African boy's emotional response when his best friend Ashan is kidnapped by European slavers and taken away in chains. The eloquent understated text begins by providing a context, describing the daily life in Ashan's village and the strong friendship between Ashan and Kumasi. When Ashan is captured, Kumasi responds at first with shock and horror and then with grief as he realizes he will never see his friend again. The author never editorializes and yet, by simply telling the painful story from an African rather than a European perspective, she provides a point of view seldom found in children's history books.

In the three years since *Tears for Ashan* was published, it has sold over 5,000 copies, and Jefferson is currently working on a sequel (Daisy Jefferson, personal communication, July 23, 1992). Although she was approached by a corporate publisher who wanted to buy the rights to the work once its success was established, Jefferson refused the offer. She had never attempted to sell the manuscript to a children's book publisher in the first place. Her reasons for self-publishing echo those of Haki Madhubuti, Glenn Thompson, and the Hudsons:

I thought it would be a challenge to publish it myself. I thought we needed to publish books and have complete control over creativity and

the thoughts that went into them. I'm not biased against white authors, but we need to do these things for our children's sakes. We've been relying on other people for too long. (Koeppel, 1989, p. 3)

All four of the African-American presses profiled earlier assert the need for books created by African-American writers, artists, and publishers. As publishers, they place a high priority on contributing to a body of authentic African-American literature for children. Each of them has succeeded in reaching a large sector of African-American book buyers, in addition to a general audience, disproving the claim that there is no market for African-American literature.

NATIVE AMERICAN PRESSES

Most minority groups in this country have been, and are still, largely ignored by the nation's major publishing houses—particularly in the field of children's books. American Indians, on the other hand, contend with a mass of material about themselves. If anything, there are too many children's books about American Indians. (Byler, 1992, p. 81)

The books to which Mary Gloyne Byler refers are fiction, nonfiction, and folklore created by outsiders. While African-Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanics suffer from a dearth of literature, Native Americans suffer from an overabundance. Of the dozens of children's books about Native Americans published by corporate presses each year, very few, if any, are written by Native Americans. In the spring of 1992, for example, the Cooperative Children's Books Center received forty-four newly published books about Native Americans; only three were by Native American writers. Inaccurate and stereotypical portrayals of Native Americans continue to abound in children's literature of the 1990s. Byler (1992) says:

Non-Indian writers have created an image of American Indians that is sheer fantasy. It is an image that is not authentic and one that has little value except that of sustaining the illusion that the original inhabitants deserved to lose their land because they were so barbaric and uncivilized. This fantasy does not take into account the rich diversity of cultures that did, and does, exist. (p. 84)

Caldwell-Wood (1992) discusses the problem of non-Native American writers relying on historical documents that were "translated and interpreted by travelers, historians, and anthropologists from the outside" rather than first-hand contact with Native American peoples themselves (p. 48). She cites the importance of alternative presses which are much more likely to publish Native American writers and artists, people who have direct experience with their subject matter. The CCBC Alternative Press Collection includes children's books from twelve Native American-owned presses in the United States and Canada. The information and perspectives these books offer depart radically from those presented in books about

Native Americans published by corporate presses. The latter are all too frequently informed by stereotypical misrepresentations prevalent in the popular culture at large. As Caldwell-Wood wryly notes: "We still exist. You may not be aware but perhaps there are Native Americans in your own neighborhood. If you are looking for buckskins, feathers and beads, you might not see us" (p. 48).

The "rich diversity of cultures" to which Byler refers is certainly the most obvious characteristic one notices in looking at the books from Native American publishers collectively. Just as alternative presses typically specialize in a particular subject area and aim for a well-defined market, most Native American presses identify with a specific tribe or culture area and publish materials about themselves for their own children. The educational centers of many of the larger tribes in the United States and Canada create resources for children about their history, mythology, and traditions (Kuipers, 1991, p. 36).

The Cross Cultural Education Center in Welling, Oklahoma, is a Cherokee-owned nonprofit organization incorporated in 1980. Their purpose is "to promote quality education for the Cherokee people through the development of bilingual and cross-cultural education programs" (Cross Cultural Education Center, 1985, p. 1). In addition to providing extensive Cherokee-language materials, the center also publishes children's fiction, nonfiction, and folklore in English. There is a distinctively Cherokee point of view in every book they publish. *Traditional Cherokee Food* (1982) by Janey B. Hendrix at first glance appears to be a simple recipe book but on closer examination it has much more depth. The author interviewed elders in order to collect the recipes and she has also included their comments on specific foods ("Both poke and cochanna are gathered in the spring...") and cooking methods ("as with many simple recipes there is controversy about how to properly prepare it"). It makes for absorbing reading even if readers do not plan to use the recipes. *Sequoyah and the Talking Leaves* (1985) by John Dameron is a one-act play that dramatizes Sequoyah's invention of the Cherokee syllabary in the early nineteenth century. The setting, characters, and events are all based on historical facts gathered from the playwright's research. Dameron's notes give helpful advice for producing the play with non-Cherokee as well as Cherokee children.

Although the books published by the Cross Cultural Education Center are primarily intended for Cherokee children in rural northeastern Oklahoma, the center recognizes that they provide valuable information about Cherokee history and culture for children throughout the United States: "Due to the great need for authentic Cherokee Indian-oriented resource materials, which are not available from orthodox commercial publishing houses, the administration

decided to make these materials available at a nominal cost to the general public" (Cross Cultural Education Center, 1985, p. 1).

Pemmican Publications of Winnipeg, Manitoba, began in 1972 as the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) Press. Their mandate was to publish educational books for the Métis people about Métis history and culture. During its first several years of operation, MMF press was staffed by volunteers and only published books when funds were available. The federation decided that the press should operate as a business, and in 1980 they applied for and received a Local Employment Assistance Program (LEAP) grant. They established a nonprofit organization called Pemmican Publications and, with funding from the grant, were able to hire writers and artists to create books and learning materials about the Métis (Loewen, 1988, p. 22).

In their catalog of publications, Pemmican defines its purpose: "to provide opportunities for Métis and Native people to tell their own stories from their own perspectives" (Pemmican Publications, 1991, p. 1). Pemmican employs a staff of five: a managing editor, a business administrator, a marketing manager, and two sales representatives. In addition to publishing fiction and nonfiction for adults, Pemmican publishes picture books, novels, and folktales for children. By 1992, they had thirty children's titles in print, most of which were picture books. One of the qualities that makes their children's books so distinctive is their realistic portrayal of contemporary Native American children. Cree author Bernelda Wheeler builds an engaging cumulative story using only simple dialogue between a mother and son in *I Can't Have Bannock But a Beaver Has a Dam* (1985). The persistent youngster peppers his mother with *why* questions, beginning with wondering why he cannot have bannock for lunch. His patient mother responds to each question, explaining that she wasn't able to make bannock because the oven wouldn't get hot because the electricity was off because the power was out and so forth. As it turns out, the power lines were knocked down by a tree felled by a beaver who was building a dam.

In *Two Pairs of Shoes* (1990) by Esther Sanderson, Maggie dreams of getting a special pair of dress shoes for her birthday and she is thrilled when her mother gets them for her. She rushes to her grandmother's house to show them off, only to find out that her grandmother has also gotten her a pair of shoes—beautiful beaded moccasins. Traditional Native American values are woven naturally into many of the picture books published by Pemmican. Their stories for young children are universal but with details specific to Native American culture. This is also true of many of their novels for older children. For example, Don Sawyer's (1988) *Where the Rivers Meet*

is the story of a teenager coping with the suicide of her best friend; what makes it unusual as a young adult novel is that the resolution lies in Native American wisdom and cultural traditions.

Daybreak Star Press in Seattle, Washington, is also particularly strong in the area of publishing about the lives of contemporary Native American children. Whereas Pemmican's contemporary stories are all fiction, Daybreak Star publishes mostly nonfiction about Native Americans in contemporary society. *Indians in Careers* by Kitty Hollow and Jeanne Heuving (1979) is a highly accessible career guide composed of interviews with sixteen Native American workers, including a bus driver, a rancher, a fisherwoman, a doctor, a bank teller, and a tribal councilman. Two books focus on traditional games and athletic activities, a highly valued part of Native American life.

While *Twana Games* (1981) is specific to the Twana people of the Skokomish Reservation in western Washington, *A'una* (1981) includes games and recipes from twenty-four Native American nations across the North American continent. *Sharing Our Worlds: Native American Children Today* (1980) includes five children from blended racial and cultural backgrounds (Salish/Filipino; Gros Ventre/Assiniboine; Klallam/Samoan/Portuguese). Black-and-white photographs of the children and their families are accompanied by upbeat first-person descriptions of how they observe their various cultural traditions. Twelve-year-old Tim says: "My mom feels it is important we learn about being Indian and Filipino. She never had the chance when she was growing up....I am proud to tell people about my cultures" (p. 11).

Daybreak Star Press is the publishing division of the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation. Because of this, their publications do not focus on a specific tribe, although, due to their location, many of their books feature Native American peoples of the Northwest Coast. The staff at Daybreak Star works with Native American tribes, groups, and individuals at all stages of creating and producing the books they publish. In describing themselves, they state: "Daybreak Star Press (DSP) publishes only those materials which accurately portray tribal cultures and histories, and the experiences of Native Americans in contemporary society. Created in response to the need for responsible materials about Native Americans, DSP assures the authenticity of its materials..." (Daybreak Star Press, 1991, p. 2).

CONCLUSION

Accuracy and authenticity are two terms one sees again and again when alternative press publishers, and especially those owned and operated by people of color, express what is important to them in publishing multicultural literature for children. They have learned

from bitter experience not to rely on outsiders, as African-American novelist Walter Dean Myers eloquently detailed in an essay printed in the *New York Times* in 1986:

I no longer feel that the [publishing] industry has any more obligation to me, to my people, to my children, than does, say, a fast-food chain. It's clear to me that if any race, any religious or social group elects to place its cultural needs in the hands of the profit makers then it had better be prepared for the inevitable disappointment. (p. 50)

Although the alternative presses profiled in this survey are vastly different from one another, they all have a common goal: to tell their own stories from their own perspectives for their own children. Through the literature they create, they strive to give children a true picture of the past and a sense of pride in the present with the hope that they, like Eloise Greenfield's Nathaniel, will see themselves in the future, "moving through the world doing good and unusual things."

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PRESSES MENTIONED

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